MARVEL
"Cable is back doing what he does best!" – COMIC WATCH
CABLE
LOVE AND CHROME
DAVID PEPOSE MIKE HENDERSON ARIF PRIANTO

"It's a fresh take on the character." – GRAPHIC POLICY

MARVEL'S MOST EXTREME MUTANT IS HEADING BACK TO THE FUTURE!

HE'S BEEN A SOLDIER. An X-Man. A protector of the timestream. From his earliest days, the mutant known as Cable has been living on borrowed time, waging a lonely war against the ravages of the Techno-Organic virus. When a high-stakes mission in the future goes catastrophically awry, Cable is left stranded in the dystopian city of Salvation Bay — and caught in the midst of a civil war that will change his life forever! And now Cable is no longer alone: He's fighting to protect an entire city infected with the same disease as him. Battling side by side with Resistance leader Avery Ryder, Cable's new cause will become personal in ways not even he could expect. With their own mortality staring them in the face, can these star-crossed soldiers survive against the mutated horrors of the Prime Conclave? Plus: One of mutantkind's most hyper-advanced foes is eating his way through time, trying to stop the X-Gene from ever evolving in the first place. Only Bishop and Cable can stop this chronal predator from achieving his goal – if they can tolerate working together long enough!

COLLECTING *CABLE: LOVE AND CHROME #1-5* — BY DAVID PEPOSE, MIKE HENDERSON AND ARIF PRIANTO — PLUS *TIMESLIDE #1*.

T+ MARVEL

***LOVE* & CHROME**

THE SON OF X-MEN LEADER CYCLOPS, NATHAN SUMMERS WAS INFECTED WITH A TECHNO-ORGANIC VIRUS THAT WOULD HAVE KILLED HIM IF NOT FOR HIS MUTANT POWERS OF TELEKINESIS PREVENTING ITS SPREAD. SENT TO THE FUTURE AND RAISED AS A SOLDIER, NATHAN HAS TRAVERSED TIME AND USED HIS ABILITIES TO SAVE HUMANS AND MUTANTS ALIKE. HE IS THE LINK BETWEEN THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE…HE IS THE MAN CALLED CABLE.

CABLE

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LOVE & CHROME

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#1

THE YEAR IS 3077... THE LAST DAYS OF THE SECOND ROXXON WAR.
AFTER DECADES OF BRUTAL CONFLICT, A LONG-AWAITED PEACE LOOMS OVER THE HORIZON...
...EXCEPT THAT IT'S ABOUT TO BE ROYALLY #$%#&% BY SURTUR'S ANGELS, AN ASGARDIAN DEATH CULT LOOKING TO START THEIR OWN PERSONAL RAGNAROK.
SO WHY IS THIS MY PROBLEM? 'CAUSE THEY'VE STOLEN TIME-TRAVEL TECHNOLOGY TO DO IT--AND I CAN'T HAVE THAT.
BUT IF YOU REALLY WANNA KNOW WHY I'M STRAPPED TO THE HEAD OF A RUNAWAY SENTINEL...?
THAT'S SIMPLE--IT'S 'CAUSE I HAVE THESE #$%#$ RIGHT WHERE I WANT THEM.

AND IT ALL STARTS WITH THIS SWEATY LITTLE CREEP--HE CALLS HIMSELF THE AXE-CUTIONER.
DON'T PASS OUT ON ME, METAL MAN--THE FIREWORKS AIN'T EVEN STARTED YET!
JUST WAIT TILL MY BOYS FINISH RIGGING UP ROXXON TOWER--THEN WE'RE ALL TAKIN' A ONE-WAY TRIP TO MUSPELHEIM, MATE!
SEE, BELLE? I TOLD YOU HE'D SPILL--YOU GOT SAT-FEED ON THE LOCATION?
CUTTING IT TIGHT, BOSS--WE'RE T-MINUS FIFTEEN UNTIL ANACHRONISM.
CHCHAK
THEN WE'RE LUCKY MY TELEKINESIS MOVES AT THE SPEED OF THOUGHT...
...AND THAT YOU CAN BODYSLIDE ME AHEAD OF THE WRECKAGE.
WH-WHAT THE...? WHAT WRECKAGE?
OH YEAH--ABOUT THAT...
LET'S SEE THOSE FIREWORKS, #$%#-HEAD.
WHEN YOU'RE FIGHTING AGAINST A PACK OF IDIOTS, TELEPATHY ALMOST FEELS LIKE OVERKILL...
...ALMOST.
...
SIR, YES, SIR!
PNK
PNK
PNK

MY NAME IS NATHAN DAYSPRING ASKANI'SON SUMMERS.
PEOPLE CALL ME CABLE...
...AND I AM A MAN RUNNING OUT OF TIME.

RAISED IN THE FIRES OF A MUTANT APOCALYPSE, I'VE BEEN A SOLDIER, AN X-MAN, A PROTECTOR OF THE TIMESTREAM...
...BUT BEFORE ALL THAT, I HAD TO FIGHT A DIFFERENT KIND OF WAR...
NNF--!
ZRAKK
ZRAKK
ZRAKK
...ALL THANKS TO THE TECHNO-ORGANIC VIRUS.
A TERMINAL DISEASE THAT TURNS FLESH INTO CHROME, NERVES INTO CIRCUITRY, ORGANS INTO HARDWARE.
EVER SINCE I WAS A KID, I'VE MANAGED MY CONDITION WITH TELEKINESIS--BUT ONE DAY, EVEN MY MUTANT GIFTS WILL FAIL...
FTHOOM
FTHOOM
FTHOOM
FRAKOWW
FRAKOWW
FRAKOWW
...AND WHEN THAT DAY COMES? I AIM TO BRING DOWN PLENTY OF BAD GUYS WITH ME.
KATHOOOOOM
ROXXON

KRAKOOM
BELLE SAYS THAT MAKES ME BULL-HEADED--BUT IN MY LINE OF WORK, IT PAYS TO BE DIRECT.
BECAUSE THE TIMELINE IS A DELICATE THING--AND THERE'S NO SHORTAGE OF LOWLIFES LOOKING TO REWRITE HISTORY.
LIKE THE SURTURS RIGGING A ROXXON POWER CORE INTO A DIRTY BOMB...
...UNTIL SOMEBODY ELSE BEAT THEM TO THE PUNCH.
BELLE--GIMME A SITREP.
DEAR LORD, IT'S A SLAUGHTERHOUSE...
SHRAKOW SHRAKOW
SHRAKOW
THAT'S THE DANGER OF TIME TRAVEL...HOW QUICKLY A PLAN CAN BECOME PAST TENSE.
DIE, HYPOCRITE!

I DUNNO WHO YOU ARE OR WHAT YOU'RE AFTER, PUNK--BUT I'LL ONLY WARN YOU ONCE...
DROP THE WEAPONS BEFORE I DROP YOU!
TELEPATHY? NICE TRY, SOLDIER--BUT THAT TRICK DOESN'T WORK ON ME ANYMORE...
FHTOOM
AND YOU CAN CALL ME CICADA... FOR HOWEVER LONG YOU'RE STILL BREATHING!
PAK
SPLAK
PZOW
BOSS-- WATCH OUT!
NNNGH-- MY ARM--!
FINE--YOU SURE TALK A LOT OF #%$#, CICADA...
LET'S SEE IF YOU CAN BACK IT UP!

I FEEL MY HAND TURNING INTO HAMBURGER MEAT--BUT I KEEP PUNCHING.
WHUB
I FEEL THE VIRUS CRAWL ACROSS MY SKIN LIKE AN ARMY OF ANTS--BUT I STILL KEEP PUNCHING.
KRAK
I HAMMER CICADA WITH ALL THE PAIN THAT ONLY A LIFETIME OF FIGHTING CAN TEACH YOU...
SPLAT
SLAM
...BUT IT'S STILL NOT ENOUGH.
MAYBE YOU DIDN'T HEAR ME THE FIRST TIME, CABLE...
I SAID I'M PUTTING YOU DOWN!
URRK--!

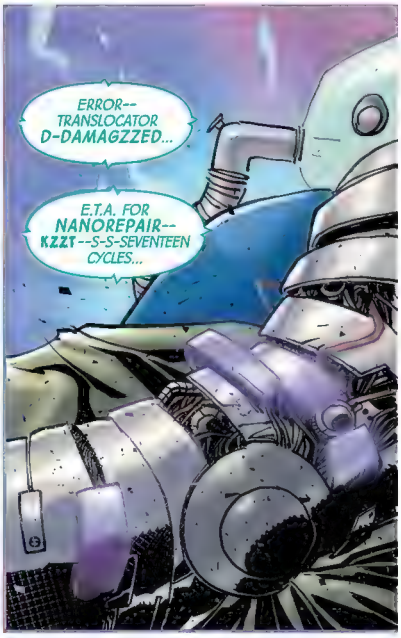
GNNN...YOU SONUVA...
SHHH--JUST LET IT HAPPEN, SOLDIER...
AFTER EVERYTHING YOU'VE DONE, YOU SHOULD CONSIDER THIS A MERCY...
NOW YOUR WAR IS FINALLY OVER.
H-HEH-- THAT'S WHERE YOU'RE WRONG ABOUT ME, PAL...
...'CUS I'VE NEVER BEEN GOOD AT LETTING THINGS GO.
BELLE-- BODYSLIDE PLUS ONE...
SHEAR THIS @#$@#%$#%&% IN HALF!
NYAAAAAAARGH!
SLUTCH

EVERY NERVE SHRIEKS IN AGONY--STUPID MOVE NEARLY KILLED US BOTH...
HRRR--!
NGHH--!
WHUMP
NO--THE SURTURS' DETONATOR--!
-KAFF-- I T-TOLD YOU-- TH-THIS ISN'T OVER YET...
TEK
DAMMIT, THE POWER CORE'S ABOUT TO GO CRITICAL--A MILLION LIVES VAPORIZED IN AN INSTANT...
BOSS, THERE'S NO TIME-- I CAN'T DISARM THE BOMB!
VREEEEEEEEEEEE
THEN WE DON'T HAVE MUCH CHOICE--WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO DITCH IT.
BELLE, SPIN ME UP A PORTAL AND GET READY TO TIMESLIDE.
LET'S JUST HOPE THAT I'M STRONG ENOUGH TO PULL THIS OFF.
FRZZZRRZZZZZ

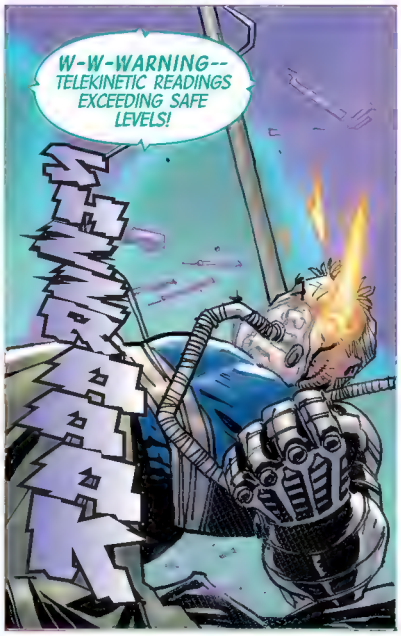
AT FIRST, ALL I CAN HEAR IS THE HIDEOUS SHRIEK OF METAL GRINDING AGAINST METAL...
THEN I REALIZE THAT'S THE SOUND OF MY OWN SCREAMING.
THERE WAS ONLY ONE PLACE I COULD DITCH THE BOMB SAFELY--AT THE FARTHEST REACHES OF TIME ITSELF.
I PUSH MY TELEKINESIS BEYOND ITS LIMITS...BUT IN THAT MOMENT, THE VIRUS POUNCES UPON MY WEAKNESS.
I FALL ACROSS CENTURIES, AS MY BODY WAGES A BLOODY WAR AGAINST ITSELF...
...AND THAT'S WHEN MY WHOLE WORLD GOES TO #@$%.

HRNN--!
B-BELLE--WHERE AM I...?

EVER SINCE I WAS A KID, I'VE ALWAYS BEEN AFRAID OF HOSPITALS.


ERROR--TRANSLOCATOR D-DAMAGZZED...
E.T.A. FOR NANOREPAIR--KZZT--S-S-SEVENTEEN CYCLES...

MAYBE IT'S 'CUS ONCE YOU GO IN, THERE'S NO GUARANTEE YOU'LL EVER WALK OUT AGAIN.


W-W-WARNING--TELEKINETIC READINGS EXCEEDING SAFE LEVELS!
SHAPOOM

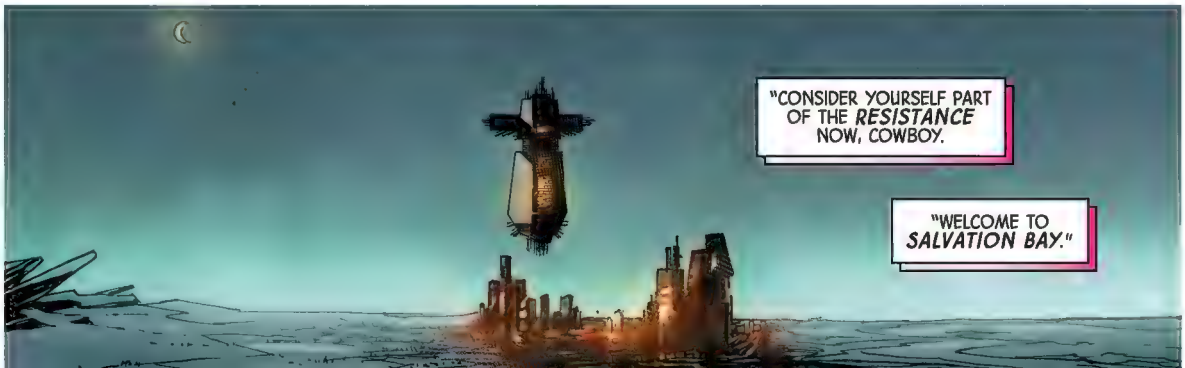
IT'S SCARY ENOUGH THAT THE VIRUS MAKES ME STARE DOWN MY OWN MORTALITY EVERY DAMN DAY...

HURRRK!

...BUT IF I'M DESTINED TO DIE ALONE...I'D RATHER DO IT STANDING UP.

NNF--!
KRSSH

MY VISION SPINS AS MY LUNGS LEARN TO BREATHE AGAIN--AND THAT'S WHEN IT HITS ME.
EASY THERE, COWBOY--YOU'D BETTER SETTLE DOWN NOW...
BECAUSE NO MATTER WHAT HOSPITALS I'VE LANDED IN, THERE'S ONE THING I'D NEVER EXPECTED TO SEE UNTIL NOW...
...SOMEBODY LIKE ME.
JUDGING BY THE STATE OF YOU...IT SEEMS LIKE YOU'VE ALREADY GONE THROUGH ENOUGH.
MY NAME'S COMMANDER AVERY RYDER.
AND IF THAT ARM OF YOURS IS ANY INDICATION...I THINK YOU AND I HAVE SOMETHING IN COMMON.


"CONSIDER YOURSELF PART OF THE RESISTANCE NOW, COWBOY.
"WELCOME TO SALVATION BAY."

AS WE CROSS INTO THE SLUMS, THE AIR TASTES *RANCID* WITH SICKNESS AND DESPERATION.
EVERY METAL LIMB, EVERY SYNTHETIC SCAR, IS LIKE GAZING INTO A *MIRROR*...
THE TECHNO-ORGANIC VIRUS RUN RAMPANT.
YOU SEEM *ANXIOUS*, COWBOY-- WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?
I KEEP MY BACKSTORY VAGUE--TELLING LOCALS YOU'RE A *TIME-TRAVELER* USUALLY ENDS WITH A MOB ON YOUR ASS.
IT'S NOTHING, COMMANDER--JUST NOT ACCUSTOMED TO SEEING OTHERS WITH OUR... *CONDITION*.
YOU'LL GET *USED* TO IT, SOLDIER-- THERE'RE *THOUSANDS* OF US IN SALVATION BAY... WITH NEW CASES EVERY DAY.
IT'S *STRANGE*--THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT AVERY THAT *PIERCES* THROUGH ALL MY INSTINCTS...
"SOLDIER"? WAS I REALLY THAT OBVIOUS?
AND IN SPITE OF MYSELF...I CAN'T HELP BUT *TRUST* HER.
YOUR EYES LOOK DIFFERENT FROM A CIVILIAN'S-- LIKE YOU'RE SIZING UP A *BATTLEFIELD*.
FOR *SOME*, THAT'D BE HARD TO MISS.

SO WHAT ABOUT YOU, COMMANDER-- WHERE'S *YOUR* BATTLEFIELD?
JUST POINT YOUR EYES TO THE *SKY*, COWBOY.
"THEY CALL THEMSELVES *THE PRIME CONCLAVE.*
"BACK WHEN THE FIRST OUTBREAKS HIT, IT WAS THE CONCLAVE WHO ROUNDED UP ALL THE INFECTED INTO THE SLUMS..."
THEY SAID IT WAS JUST A *TEMPORARY MEASURE* UNTIL THEY FOUND A CURE...
...UNTIL THEY REALIZED JUST HOW *PROFITABLE* A CAPTIVE POPULATION COULD BE.
LAST CALL
"NOW THEY'VE GOT AN *ARMY* OF FORCED LABOR TOILING AWAY IN THEIR MINES AND THEIR FACTORIES...
"ANYTHING FOR A HIT OF *SPARK*."
PAFF
THE SPARK SERUM SLOWS THE VIRUS' SPREAD, KEEPS OUR *SYMPTOMS* AT BAY...
...AND ALL IT COSTS US IS OUR *FREEDOM.*

NICE PLACE YOU'VE GOT HERE, COMMANDER.
AT EASE, SOLDIER...IN MY BAR, YOU CAN CALL ME AVERY.
SURE...BUT ONLY IF YOU CALL ME NATHAN.
I DON'T MEAN TO PRY, BUT...CAN I ASK YOU HOW IT HAPPENED?
HOW YOU GOT INFECTED, I MEAN.
AH, IT WAS YEARS AGO--BACK WHEN THE WARLOCKS FIRST BREACHED THE CITY WALLS, Y'KNOW?
SOMEHOW, I MANAGED TO SURVIVE THE INITIAL INFECTION...MY SISTER, LUCY, WASN'T SO LUCKY.
IT WAS THE HARDEST DAY OF MY LIFE WHEN SHE DIED... BUT I SWORE TO HER I WOULDN'T LET THIS VIRUS KEEP ME FROM LIVING.
WHAT ABOUT YOU? THE WAY YOU STITCHED YOURSELF TOGETHER BACK IN THE INFIRMARY...
IT'S...COMPLICATED. WHERE I COME FROM, THERE WEREN'T OTHERS LIKE ME...
BUT I WAS BORN WITH A MUTATION THAT HELPED ME SURVIVE.
AND THIS "MUTATION"...DID IT CURE YOU?
NO... JUST BORROWED TIME AT BEST.
"THEN MAYBE THAT'S WHAT WE SHOULD BE DRINKING TO, NATHAN...
"...TO BORROWED TIME--AND NOT WASTING A SINGLE SECOND OF IT."

THE MOMENT LINGERS BETWEEN US--UNTIL A LOW HUM CUTS THROUGH THE SILENCE.
AVERY...
AFTER THAT...IT ONLY TAKES A SECOND FOR THE VOLUME TO CATCH UP.
HIT THE DECK!
SKRAWOOOOOM
SON OF A @#$%@-- THEY'VE FOUND US...
"IT'S THE CONCLAVE!"
CENTURIONS-- SEARCH EVERY TENEMENT!
IF THESE SYNTH-TRAITORS REFUSE TO TELL US THE LOCATION OF THE RESISTANCE...
...THEN WE SHALL SIFT THROUGH THEIR ASHES TO FIND THEM!
KA-BOOOOO

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
BAMM
YOU MEAN BESIDES THEM TRASHING MY BAR? DON'T WORRY-- I'VE BEEN PREPARING FOR THIS...
HUH-- THAT'S QUITE THE COLLECTION YOU'VE GOT THERE, AVERY...
OH, THIS OLD THING...? I CALL HER THE TESLA BATTLEAXE.
AND CALL ME "COMMANDER" WHEN WE'RE IN THE FIELD.
VREEEEEEEEEEE
IT'S HARD NOT TO BE IMPRESSED--SHE'S SAVVY, SELF-ASSURED, UTTERLY FEARLESS...
HERE, TAKE A SIDEARM--EVER FIRED A PARTICLE BLASTER BEFORE?
...A WOMAN AFTER MY OWN HEART.
YEAH...I THINK I CAN MANAGE.
OHOHAK

WHEN I FIRST SPOT THE CONCLAVE SOLDIERS, I RECOGNIZE THEM FROM A HUNDRED DIFFERENT TIMELINES.
IF YOU LEPERS VALUE YOUR PITIFUL LIVES, YOU'D DO WELL NOT TO PROVOKE OUR ALMIGHTY WRATH...
JUST ANOTHER GROUP OF SAD JACKBOOTED THUGS LOOKING TO OPPRESS ANYBODY WEAKER THAN THEM.
NOW GIVE US THE LOCATION OF THE RESISTANCE, AND WE SHALL-- HNNK!
FTHOOOM
BUT IF THESE GUTLESS COWARDS WANNA SEE WHAT A REAL FIGHT LOOKS LIKE...
UKK UKK UKK...
CENTURIONS, SCATTER--IT'S AN AMBUSH!
TNK
...THEN WE'LL GIVE THEM A @#$%-KICKING THEY'LL NEVER FORGET.
FWOOO

WE LEAP FROM THE ROOFTOPS WITHOUT SPEAKING A WORD.
THERE'S NOT A SHRED OF TELEPATHY SHARED-- INSTEAD, WE MOVE TOGETHER SIMPLY ON PURE INSTINCT.
SOMEHOW, IT FEELS LIKE WE'VE BEEN FIGHTING IN THE SAME TRENCHES ALL OUR LIVES.

WEAPONS HOT, COMMANDER-- DON'T LET THEM OVERTAKE YOU!
THEN PREP FOR FLANKING MANEUVERS, COWBOY...
NOW COVER MY SIX!
HEY, BOSS-- ISN'T THAT SUPPOSED TO BE YOUR LINE...?
YEAH, BELLE--BUT I GOTTA ADMIT...
BRAKKABRAKKABRAKKABRAKKA
...IT LOOKS BETTER ON HER.
YOU THINK YOU CAN THREATEN MY PEOPLE, CONCLAVE SCUM?!
NOT TODAY, YOU BASTARDS...
NOT AS LONG AS I'M STILL BREATHING!
SHAKK
THRAKK
SHRANGG

SURRENDER NOW, HERETIC!
SONUVA...
YOU HAVE BEEN FOUND GUILTY OF TREASON AGAINST THE PRIME CONCLAVE...
I HEREBY SENTENCE YOU TO IMMEDIATE EXTERMINATION!
VRMMMMMMMMMMMM
WHUFF--!
THOOOM
NATHAN--
NO!
KRAKA
BOOOM

OH GOD-- YOU KILLED HIM...
"KILLED HIM"?
MY DEAR, IF YOUR COMRADE SHARED YOUR AFFLICTION, THEN I'D SAY WE SHOWED HIM MERCY.
AFTER ALL, IT'S FAR BETTER TO DIE WITH DIGNITY THAN LINGER IN THIS SQUALOR...WOULDN'T YOU AGREE--?
THE REST OF HIS SPEECH GETS LOST AMONG THE HEAVY ARTILLERY.
SHRAKOWW
OH GOD-- RUN!
SHRAKOWW
SHRAKOWW
SHRAKOWW
THE PRIME CONCLAVE'S FIRST MISTAKE WAS BEING OVERCONFIDENT--BUT IN MY LINE OF WORK, THEY'RE HARDLY THE FIRST TO @#$# THINGS UP.
THERE'RE ENTIRE HISTORY BOOKS FULL OF WARLORDS AND CRIMINALS WHO HAVE TRIED TO KILL ME...
...BUT THERE'S A BIG DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WANTING IT...AND EARNING IT.

BECAUSE EVERY DAY OF MY LIFE HAS BEEN A FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL...
...AND I'VE GOTTEN REALLY DAMN GOOD AT IT.
I'M ONLY GONNA TELL YOU PUNKS THIS ONCE...
STAY THE @#$% OUT OF SALVATION BAY.
CH-CHAK
DEAR LORD--HE'S NOT HUMAN!
RETREAT, BROTHERS--BEFORE THEIR INFECTION CONSUMES US ALL!
I DON'T BELIEVE IT, COWBOY--YOU'RE STILL ALIVE!
NNFF--YEAH, WELL...
...AT LEAST ONCE THE ADRENALINE KICKS BACK IN.

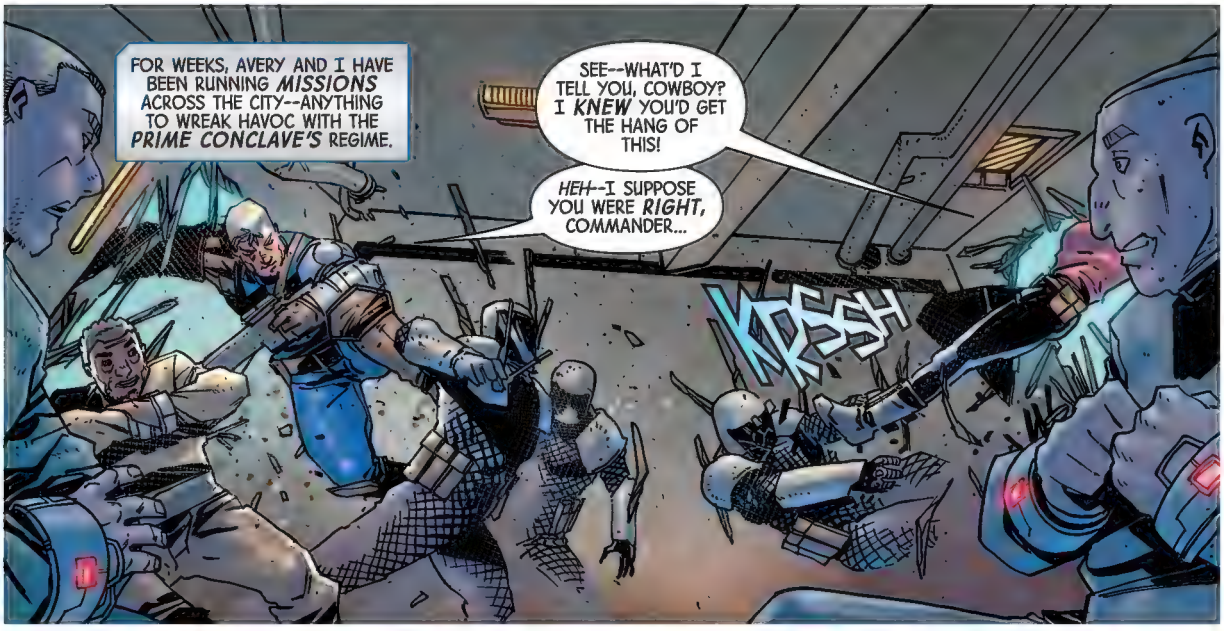
NORMALLY, THIS IS WHEN I'D MAKE MY EXIT--BUT SOMETHING HOLDS ME BACK.
YEAH, WELL-- IF YOU EVER WANT TO TRY ANYTHING STUPID LIKE THAT AGAIN...
...I'M SURE THE RESISTANCE WOULD LOVE TO HAVE YOU STICK AROUND.
I TELL MYSELF IT'S JUST UNTIL MY TRANSLOCATOR IS FIXED...
OH, REALLY... JUST THE RESISTANCE?
BUT IF I'M BEING TRULY HONEST... I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A LOUSY LIAR.
HEH--PLAY YOUR CARDS RIGHT, AND MAYBE I'LL CALL YOU, COWBOY...
...WHEN I NEED SOMEBODY TO PUNCH OUT A TANK.
YOU DRIVE A HARD BARGAIN, COMMANDER...
WHAT THE HELL. I SUPPOSE I COULD STICK AROUND A LITTLE WHILE LONGER.

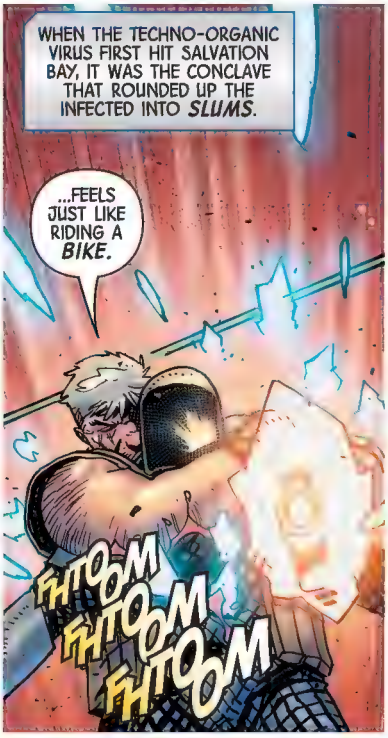
I SEE YOU, YOU SON OF A @#$#@...
AND IF YOU THINK THESE PEOPLE CAN PROTECT YOU... THEN YOU'D BETTER THINK AGAIN.
'CAUSE AFTER EVERYTHING YOU'VE COST ME...
...I'M GONNA WIPE YOU FROM THE PAGES OF HISTORY.

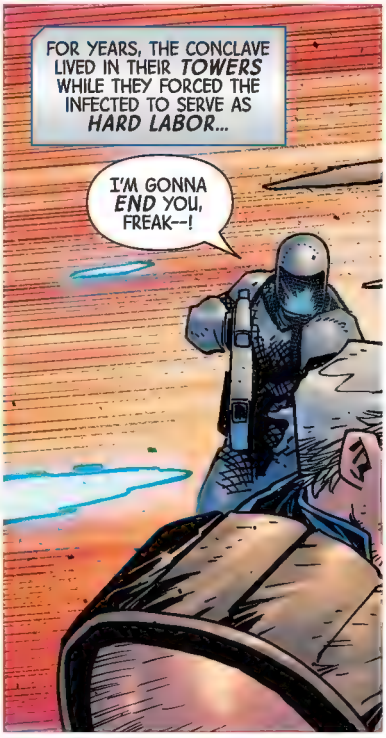
#2

MY NAME IS NATHAN DAYSPRING ASKANI'SON SUMMERS--AND I ALWAYS THOUGHT I WAS ALONE.
HIGH NOON. THOUSANDS OF YEARS FROM NOW.
YOU LOOK TENSE, SUMMERS--THIS YOUR FIRST TIME?
I WAS RAISED IN A WAR-TORN FUTURE--A LAST-DITCH EFFORT TO SAVE ME FROM THE TECHNO-ORGANIC VIRUS.
TENSE--? NAH...
THIS IS HOW I ALWAYS LOOK WHEN I'M ABOUT TO JUMP ONTO A PRISON TRAIN AT 200 MILES PER HOUR.
I'VE FOUGHT ACROSS A THOUSAND TIMELINES, BUT I'D NEVER MET ANYBODY ELSE WITH MY CONDITION...TILL I MET AVERY RYDER.
HEH--YOU SAYING THAT JUST TO IMPRESS ME, COWBOY?
NOW, I'VE STOOD UP FOR A LOT OF CAUSES IN MY LIFE--EVERYTHING FROM HUMANS TO MUTANTS TO COUNTRIES AND KINGDOMS LONG LOST TO HISTORY...
WELL, THAT DEPENDS, AVERY...
IS IT WORKING?
BUT EVER SINCE I LANDED IN SALVATION BAY...I'VE FOUND MYSELF FIGHTING FOR SOMETHING ELSE ENTIRELY.
GUESS THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY FOR US TO FIND OUT...
...IF YOU'RE WILLING TO TAKE THE LEAP.

PEOPLE CALL ME *CABLE*-- I'M A SOLDIER OF THE *TIMESTREAM*.
AND FOR THE FIRST TIME THAT I CAN REMEMBER... I DON'T FEEL SO *ALONE* ANYMORE.
SHOT THROUGH THE HEART

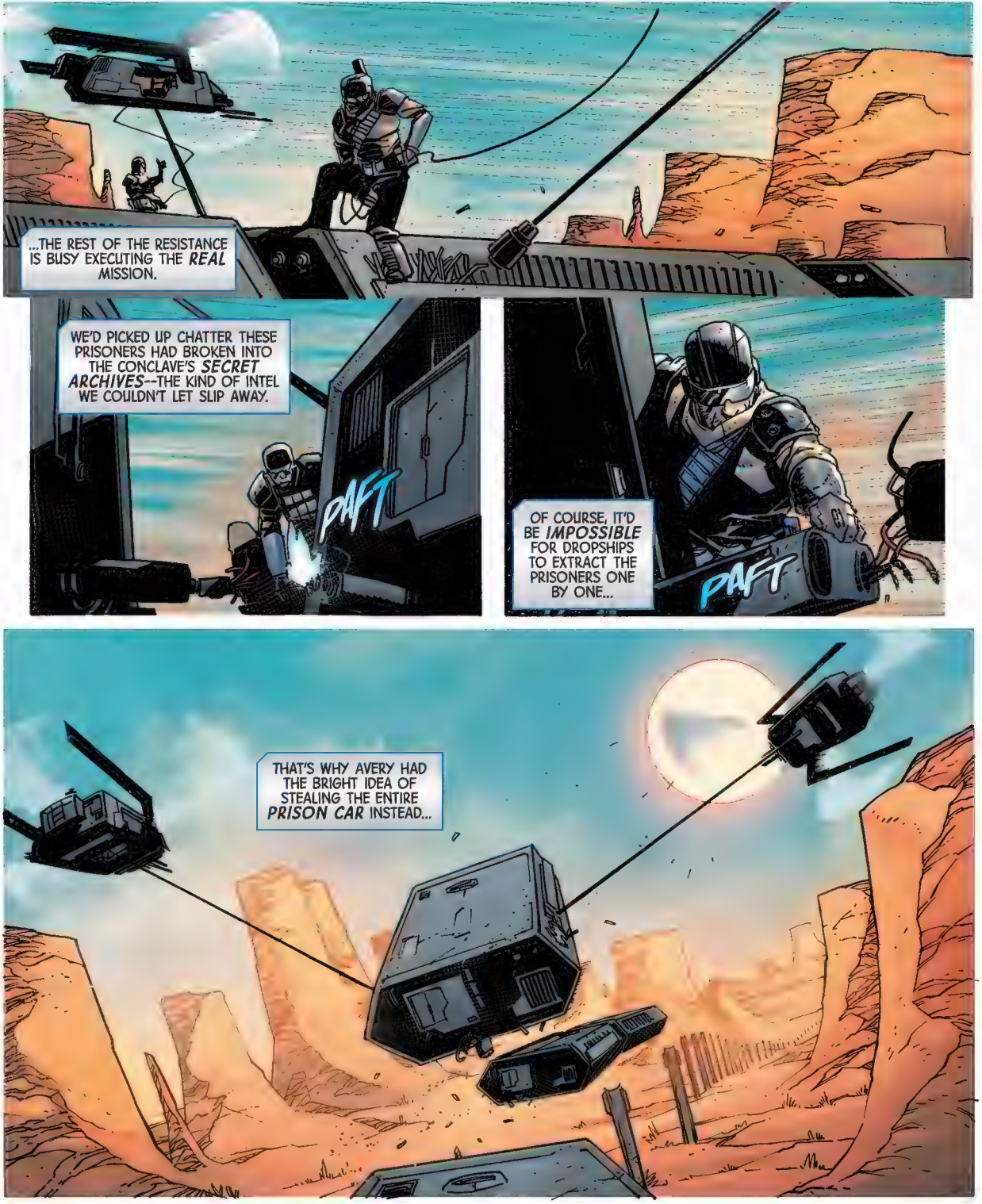

FOR WEEKS, AVERY AND I HAVE BEEN RUNNING MISSIONS ACROSS THE CITY--ANYTHING TO WREAK HAVOC WITH THE PRIME CONCLAVE'S REGIME.
SEE--WHAT'D I TELL YOU, COWBOY? I KNEW YOU'D GET THE HANG OF THIS!
HEH--I SUPPOSE YOU WERE RIGHT, COMMANDER...
KRSSH


WHEN THE TECHNO-ORGANIC VIRUS FIRST HIT SALVATION BAY, IT WAS THE CONCLAVE THAT ROUNDED UP THE INFECTED INTO SLUMS.
...FEELS JUST LIKE RIDING A BIKE.
FHTOOM FHTOOM FHTOOM


FOR YEARS, THE CONCLAVE LIVED IN THEIR TOWERS WHILE THEY FORCED THE INFECTED TO SERVE AS HARD LABOR...
I'M GONNA END YOU, FREAK--!

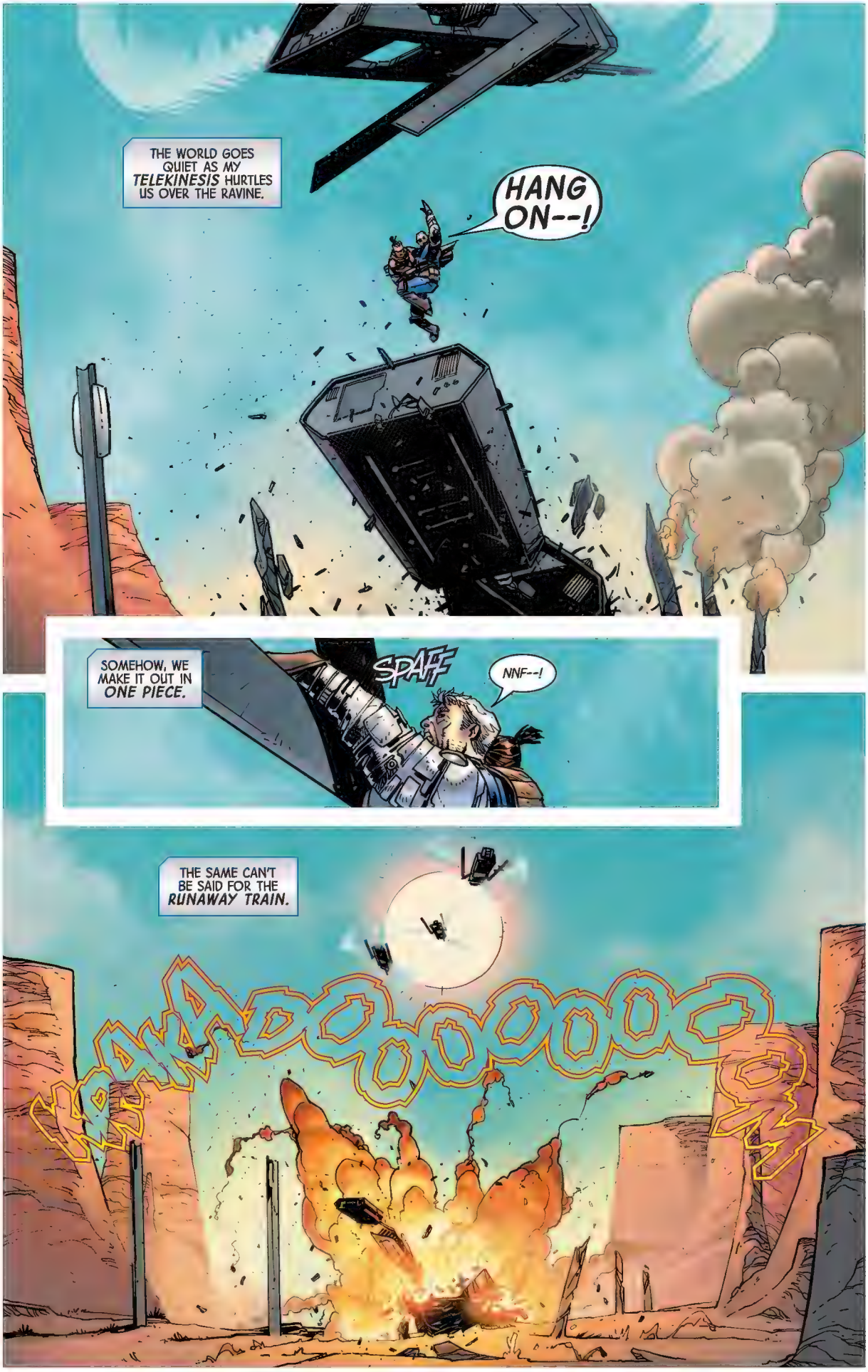
...UNTIL THE RESISTANCE DECIDED TO BRING THEIR PEOPLE A BETTER FUTURE.
NOT ON YOUR BEST DAY, @#$@#$!
SPLAKK

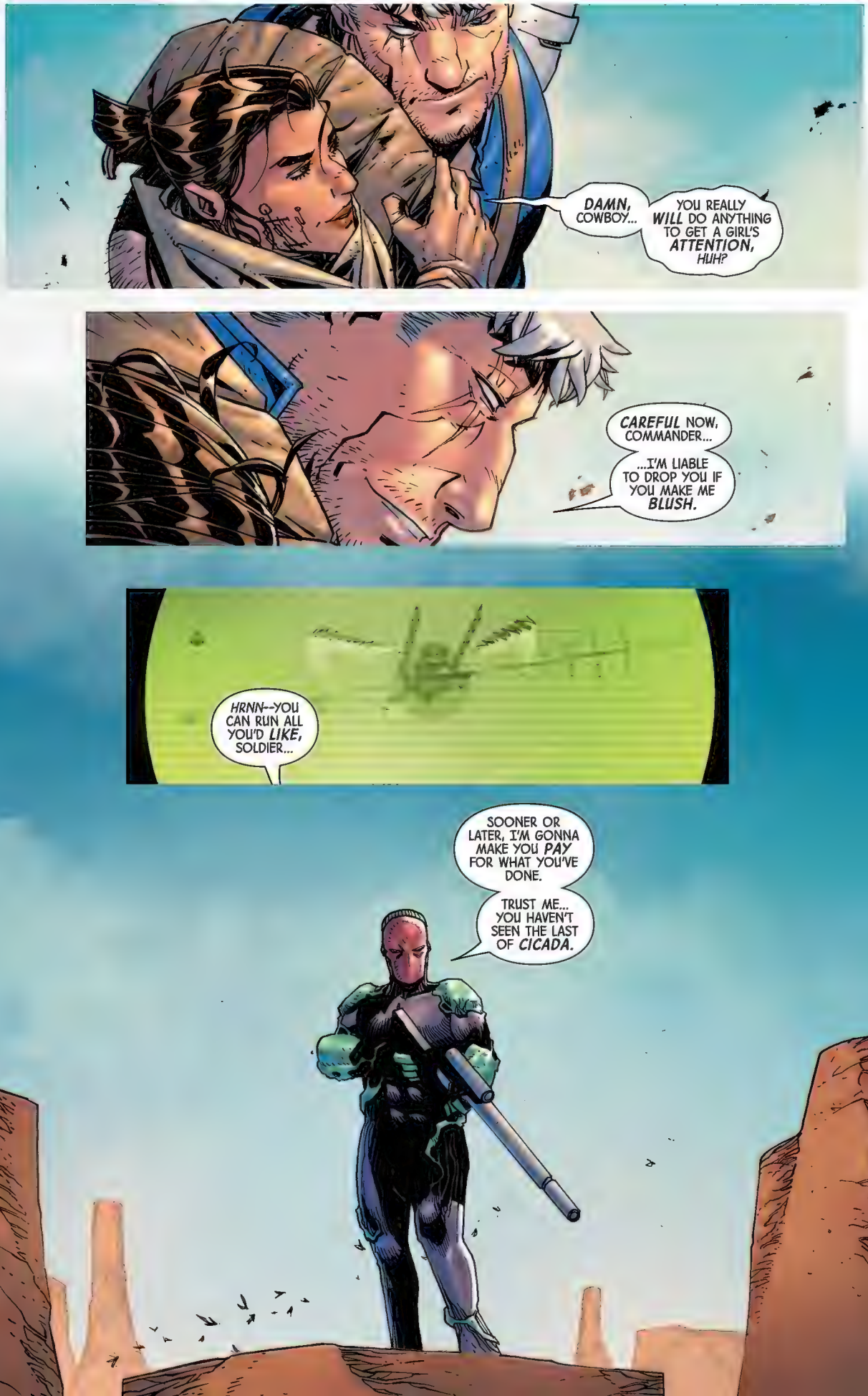
BUT TODAY, AVERY AND I ARE JUST THE DISTRACTION--WHILE WE BRING THE FIGHT TO THE CONCLAVE'S GUARDS...
THANKS FOR THE BACKUP, COMMANDER--YOU READY FOR MORE?
ANYTIME, COWBOY--SAVING YOUR ASS IS JUST MY WAY OF WARMING UP.


...THE REST OF THE RESISTANCE IS BUSY EXECUTING THE REAL MISSION.
WE'D PICKED UP CHATTER THESE PRISONERS HAD BROKEN INTO THE CONCLAVE'S SECRET ARCHIVES--THE KIND OF INTEL WE COULDN'T LET SLIP AWAY.
PAFT
OF COURSE, IT'D BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR DROPSHIPS TO EXTRACT THE PRISONERS ONE BY ONE...
PAFT
THAT'S WHY AVERY HAD THE BRIGHT IDEA OF STEALING THE ENTIRE PRISON CAR INSTEAD...
...AND LEAVING THE PRIME CONCLAVE A LITTLE SOMETHING TO REMEMBER US BY.
FRAKOOOOM

PRISONERS ARE AIRBORNE! YOU READY TO GO, AVERY?
THE MAG-LEV TRACKS ARE WRECKED--WE'VE GOT SIXTY SECONDS TO MAKE THE JUMP...
HRRGGH!
AVERY--!
WHICH IS ALL THE TIME WE NEED FOR OUR LUCK TO TURN TO CRAP.
I RECOGNIZE WHAT IT IS EVEN BEFORE SHE DOES--THE TELLTALE SIGNS OF TECHNO-ORGANIC POISONING...
WH-WHAT THE HELL...?
IT'S ALL RIGHT, AVERY--JUST HANG ON TO ME AND I'LL GET US OUT OF HERE...
÷KAFF KAFF÷ B-BEHIND YOU...
MOVE, COWBOY.
WE'VE GOT A SNIPER!
BRAKKABRAKKABRAKKABRAKKA

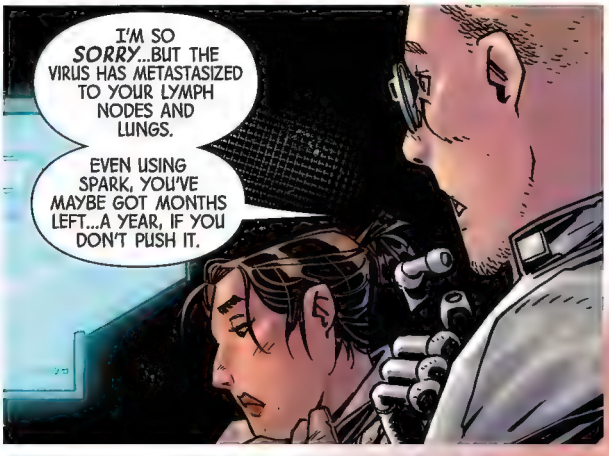
VPP
SPAFF
HEH-- THAT'S WHAT I GET FOR COUNTING YOU OUT TOO EARLY, COMMANDER...
BELLE, YOU GOT A READING ON OUR SHOOTER?
NEGATIVE, BOSS--TOO MUCH INTERFERENCE FROM THE MAG-LEV.
SPANG
"BUT IF WE DON'T GET OFF THIS TRAIN FAST, WE'RE NOT GONNA LIVE LONG ENOUGH TO CARE ABOUT IT!"
BRAKKABRAKKABRAKKABRAKKA
SONUVA-- WE'VE MISSED THE EXTRACTION WINDOW--THERE'S NO OTHER CHOICE...
TIME TO PICK UP THE PACE, COMMANDER...
AND, BELLE-- RELAY A SIGNAL TO THE NEAREST DROPSHIP.
TELL 'EM WE'RE GONNA BE CUTTING IT CLOSE!


THE WORLD GOES QUIET AS MY *TELEKINESIS* HURTLES US OVER THE RAVINE.
HANG ON--!
SOMEHOW, WE MAKE IT OUT IN *ONE PIECE.*
SPAFF
NNF--!
THE SAME CAN'T BE SAID FOR THE *RUNAWAY TRAIN.*
KRAKOOO

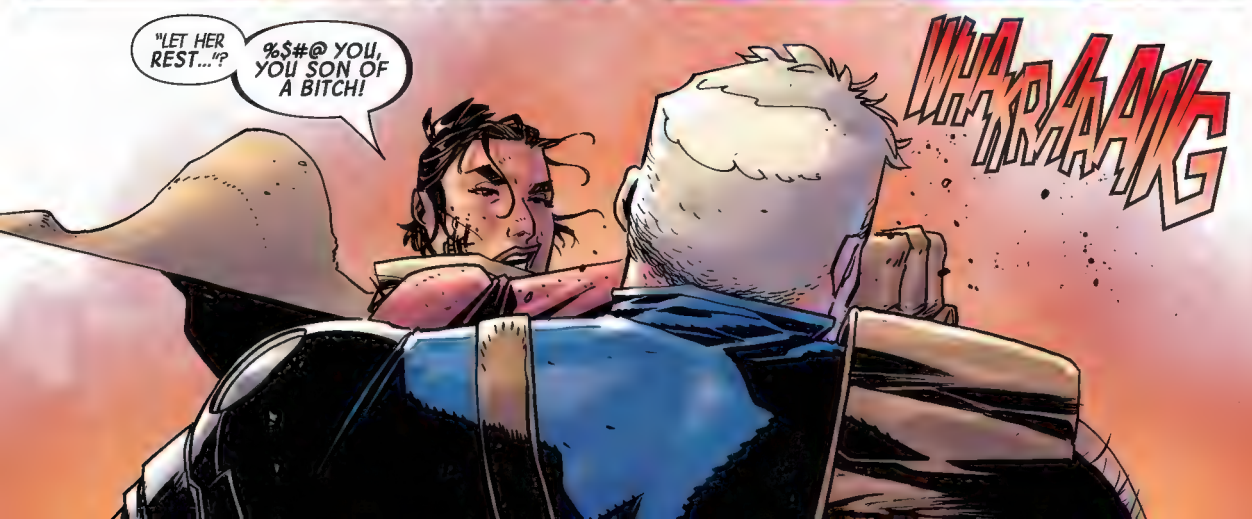

DAMN, COWBOY...
YOU REALLY WILL DO ANYTHING TO GET A GIRL'S ATTENTION, HUH?
CAREFUL NOW, COMMANDER...
...I'M LIABLE TO DROP YOU IF YOU MAKE ME BLUSH.
HRNN--YOU CAN RUN ALL YOU'D LIKE, SOLDIER...
SOONER OR LATER, I'M GONNA MAKE YOU PAY FOR WHAT YOU'VE DONE.
TRUST ME... YOU HAVEN'T SEEN THE LAST OF CICADA.

RESISTANCE HEADQUARTERS.
SALVATION BAY.
"SO, DOC...ARE YOU GONNA CLEAR ME FOR FIELD DUTY OR WHAT?"

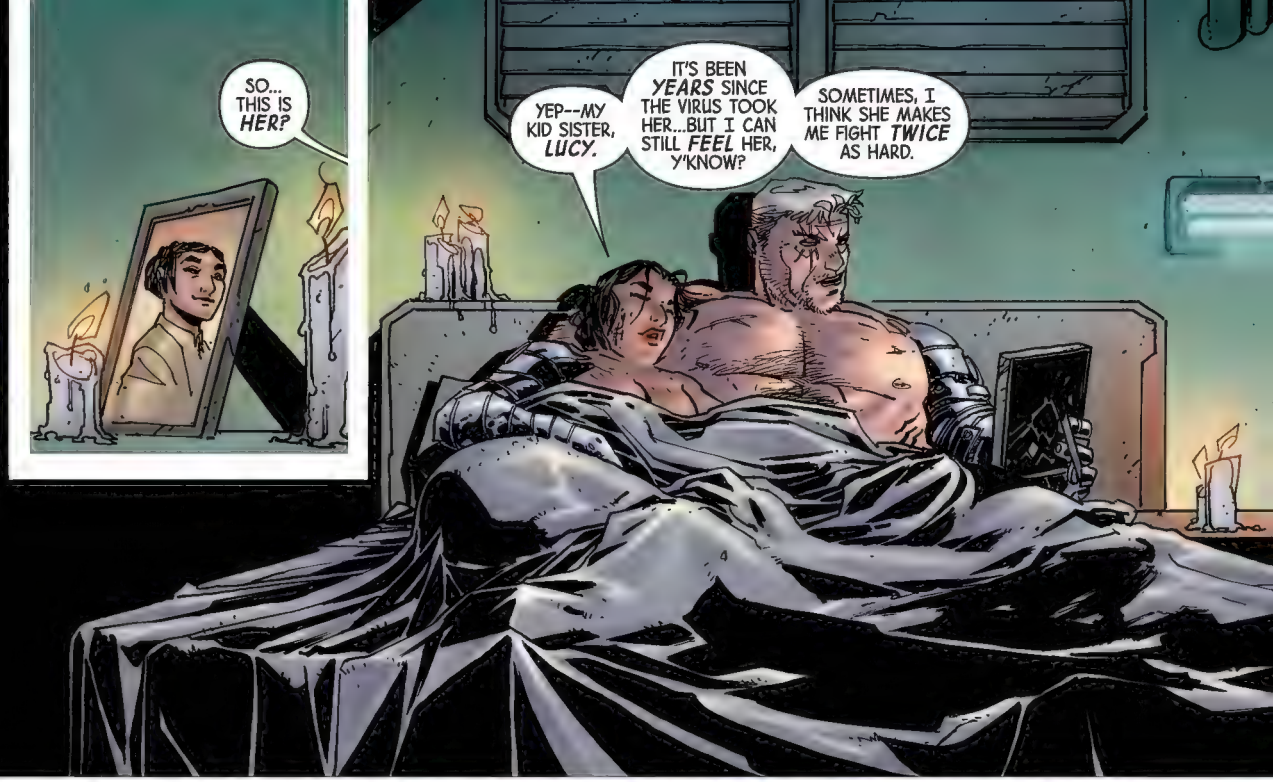
SEE, SPARK INHALER'S ALREADY PATCHING ME BACK TOGETHER...
C'MON--THOSE PRISONERS NABBED THE SECURITY PROTOCOLS FOR THE CONCLAVE'S BIGGEST SPARK REFINERY.
WE'VE GOTTA MOVE ON IT BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!
PAFF
COMMANDER, I'M NOT SURE YOU UNDERSTAND THE SEVERITY OF YOUR CONDITION...


I'M SO SORRY...BUT THE VIRUS HAS METASTASIZED TO YOUR LYMPH NODES AND LUNGS.
EVEN USING SPARK, YOU'VE MAYBE GOT MONTHS LEFT...A YEAR, IF YOU DON'T PUSH IT.

DAMMIT ALL TO HELL...
THEN IT'S SETTLED--WE'RE TAKING AVERY OFF ACTIVE DUTY IMMEDIATELY.
SHE'S ALREADY GIVEN MORE THAN ENOUGH TO THE RESISTANCE--WE CAN AFFORD TO LET HER REST.

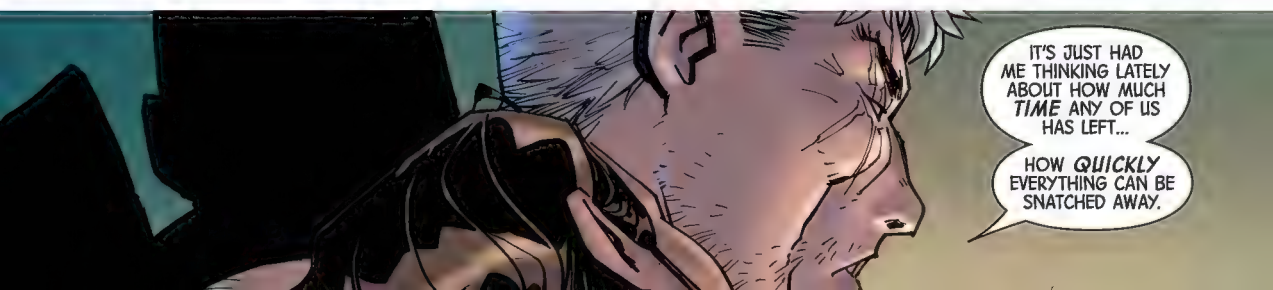

"LET HER REST..."?
%$#@ YOU, YOU SON OF A BITCH!
WHRAAAK

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU PLAYING AT, LADY?!
JUST 'CAUSE YOU HAVE POWERS, IT DOESN'T GIVE YOU THE RIGHT TO PLAY GOD...
I TOLD YOU THE DEAL AT THE BEGINNING--I'M NOT DYING IN A HOSPITAL BED!
ERM...I'LL JUST LEAVE YOU TWO TO DELIBERATE.
SO WHAT'S THE ALTERNATIVE--YOU GONNA RISK THE MISSION GOING OUT GUNS BLAZING INSTEAD?
I'M JUST TRYING TO LOOK OUT FOR YOU, AVERY--ONE OF US NEEDS TO THINK ABOUT THE BIGGER PICTURE!
OH YEAH? THEN MAYBE YOU SHOULD STOP THINKING ABOUT THE "BIGGER PICTURE"...
...AND START THINKING ABOUT THE GREATER GOOD INSTEAD!
WE GLARE AT ONE ANOTHER, TEMPERS SMOLDERING--SHE LOOKS READY TO POUNCE...
...
...
...BUT AS IT TURNS OUT...THE FEELING'S MUTUAL.


SO... THIS IS HER?
YEP--MY KID SISTER, LUCY.
IT'S BEEN YEARS SINCE THE VIRUS TOOK HER...BUT I CAN STILL FEEL HER, Y'KNOW?
SOMETIMES, I THINK SHE MAKES ME FIGHT TWICE AS HARD.

WHAT'S WRONG, COWBOY? I THOUGHT YOU AND I HAD ALREADY FINISHED MAKING UP...
AH--IT'S NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU, AVERY...

IT'S JUST SOMETHING SIMILAR HAPPENED TO ME NOT TOO LONG AGO--HER NAME WAS HOPE.
I RAISED HER LIKE MY OWN... SHE WAS TRULY THE VERY BEST PART OF ME.
AND WHEN I LOST HER...ALL I COULD THINK TO DO WAS RUN AWAY.


IT'S JUST HAD ME THINKING LATELY ABOUT HOW MUCH TIME ANY OF US HAS LEFT...
HOW QUICKLY EVERYTHING CAN BE SNATCHED AWAY.

HEH--SOMETIMES I FORGET YOU AREN'T LIKE THE REST OF US, SOLDIER...
NOT JUST YOUR FANCY POWERS... BUT THAT YOU HAD TO FACE THE VIRUS ALL ALONE.
THIS VIRUS WE'VE GOT? IT'S TRAGIC AND IT'S UNFAIR...
...BUT IT'S WHAT BROUGHT US TOGETHER...IT'S WHY WE FEEL THE ELECTRICITY WHEN WE TOUCH.
THE WAY YOU TALK ABOUT IT, IT ALMOST SOUNDS BEAUTIFUL...
BUT THE ONLY THING THE VIRUS EVER TAUGHT ME WAS NEVER TO GET TOO ATTACHED.
YEAH, WELL... MAYBE IT'S TIME WE LEARN A NEW LESSON, COWBOY...
...'CAUSE IT'S NEVER BEEN ABOUT HOW MUCH TIME WE'VE GOT LEFT...
...ALL THAT MATTERS IS HOW WE USE IT.

NIGHT FALLS AS WE MOVE ON THE MASTER REFINERY.
IT'S THE KEY TO THE CONCLAVE'S STRANGLEHOLD OVER SALVATION BAY--THE DRUG KNOWN AS SPARK.
THE DRUG INHIBITS THE VIRUS' SYMPTOMS--THE PERFECT MEANS FOR KEEPING A DESPERATE POPULATION IN CHECK...
THRAKK
TEK
NO! WE CAN'T LET THEM ACCESS THE--NYARRGH!
IT'S HIGH PAST TIME SOMEBODY SETTLED THE SCORE.
THAT'S THE LAST OF THE GUARDS...
BELLE-- FIND OUT WHO THIS CREEP WAS CALLING.
BOSS--I'M NOT PICKING UP ANY SIGNALS OUTSIDE THE FACILITY...

SUDDENLY, THE ROOM EXPLODES INTO CHAOS--FIRST, A VERITABLE STORM OF SYNTHETIC FLESH...
HEADS UP, COMMANDER--WE'VE GOT OURSELVES SOME COMPANY!
...FOLLOWED BY A TELEKINETIC SHOCKWAVE THAT PLOWS PAST US LIKE A TRUCK.
DAMMIT, EVERYBODY GRAB-- NNF!
THE CONCLAVE WASN'T JUST MAKING SPARK HERE.
NO...TURNS OUT THEY'D ALSO BEEN COOKING UP SOME NASTY GUARD DOGS TO PROTECT IT TOO.
BIO-FORM DESIGNATE: ISAAC ACTIVATED--KZZT-- SECURITY BREACH DETECTED...
ALERT CONFIRMEDDDD-- BIO-FORM DESIGNATE: ISHMAEL--ELIMINATE ALL INTRUDERS!

LOOK AT THEIR MARKINGS, AVERY--THEY'VE BEEN INFECTED WITH THE VIRUS!
SHZZRAK
YEAH--AND SPLICED WITH GOD KNOWS WHAT KINDS OF OUTLAWED TECH!
FTHOOM FTHOOM
NNNNEUTRALIZING ENEMY FIRE--ISHMAEL, D-D-DEPLOY COUNTERMEASURES!
1110111011--BIOSYNTHETIC FABRICATION AT 700%!
VWWWWM
WHKRAK
COWBOY, LOOK--GUHH!
STAB THEIR EYES--AVERY'S OUT COLD...
NNN...
FTHOOM
...WHICH MEANS I'M GONNA HAVE TO FIGHT THIS ONE DIRTY.

VRRT--
OPTICAL HARDWARE FAILURE...
REBOOTING TRACKING SYSTEMS!
COME ON, YOU CREEPY BASTARDS--HIT ME WITH YOUR BEST SHOT...
SHNK SHNK SHNK
404--
TARGET IDENTIFIED--
DISPATCHING INTRUDER!
THAT'S IT--ALL I NEED IS TO KEEP YOU BOTH OFF-BALANCE...
ERROR--
TARGET REMAINS OPERATIONAL!
...BECAUSE IF YOU CAN MESS WITH YOUR ENEMIES' HEADS...
RRRRR--
D-D-DIE, INTRUDER!
SHNK

N-NO--!
...THAT'S WHEN THEY START TO MAKE EVEN BIGGER MISTAKES.
1100011--ISHMAEL--!
THE ROOM SHAKES AS ISAAC REELS IN HORROR--I'VE GOT ONLY ONE SHOT AT BRINGING HIM DOWN...
ERROR--NEURAL INTERFACE RECALIBRATING...
PZOWW
SPAKK
SPANGG
UNFORTUNATELY FOR ME...THE MONSTER STILL MOVES FASTER.
TELEKINETIC DEFENSES ENGAGED!
KRAAK
NNF--!

404-- PSIONIC ENERGY DETECTED...
SCANNING IN PROGRESS...
RNNN... AVERY...
QUERY-- TECHNO-ORGANIC ACTIVITY AT SUBOPTIMAL LEVELS...
T-T-TELEKINETIC INTERFERENCE DETECTED.
INITIATING TELEKINETIC COUNTERFREQUENCY!
NYAAAARGH!
SHZAAAAM
VOLTAGE
AVERY... ON YOUR FEET, SOLDIER!
HNN-- WHAT THE...?
...NATHAN?

SYSTEMS RECALIBRATING--VRRT--VITAL SIGNS DETECTED...
QUERY--WHY DO YOU STILL FIGHT, INTRUDER?
HEH--YOU SCRAP-MACHINE REJECTS REALLY DON'T GET IT, DO YOU...?
YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE FIGHTING ME...
KZZT
...BUT I WAS JUST THE DISTRACTION.
HEY, UGLY...
...TROUBLESHOOT THIS!
KZZZZZZKRAKT
10111011--TELEKINETIC SYSTEMS OVERLOADING!

ERROR-- TELEKINETIC SYSTEMS OVER--!
KRAKOOOOM
NNF...SO I GUESS I'VE GOT YOU TO THANK FOR THE PSYCHIC WAKE-UP CALL, HUH?
COWBOY, DO YOU HEAR ME...?
OH GOD--THE VIRUS!
IT'S KILLING HIM!

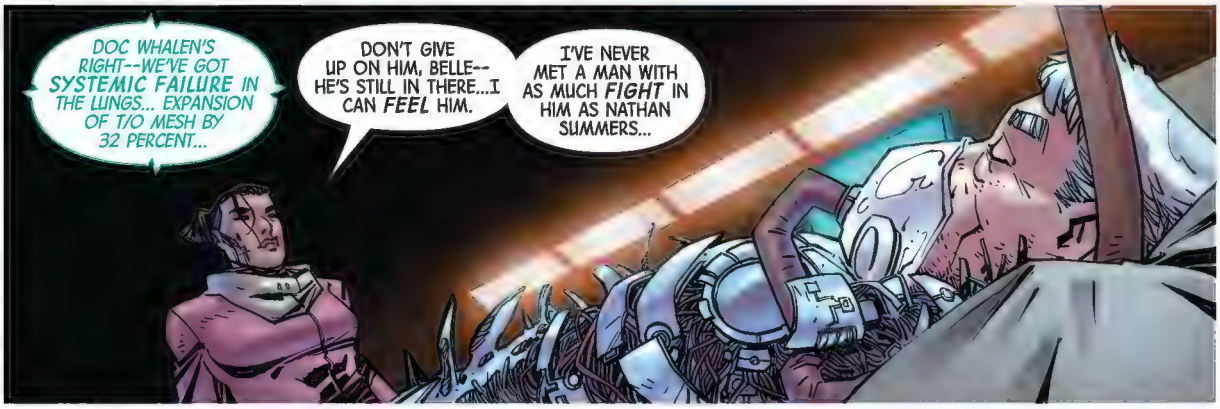
#3
LOVE & CHROME

PEOPLE ALWAYS SAY THAT WHEN YOU'RE DYING, YOUR LIFE *FLASHES* BEFORE YOUR EYES.
I ALWAYS USED TO THINK THAT WAS A CROCK OF @#$@.
BEEP
AS A TIME-TRAVELER, I'VE STARED DEATH IN THE FACE ACROSS EVERY *BATTLEFIELD* IN HISTORY...
FTHOOM FTHOOM FTHOOM
...BUT I'VE NEVER TANGLED WITH A BIGGER BASTARD THAN *THE TECHNO-ORGANIC VIRUS.*
BEEP BEEP
EVERY DAY OF MY LIFE, I'VE HAD TO FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL WITH EVERY SHRED OF MY *PSIONIC GIFTS...*
DO NOT FIGHT THE FUTURE...
YOUR ASSIMILATION IS AT HAND!
PAFT SPLAK KTANG

...BUT NOW IT LOOKS LIKE MY TICKET'S ABOUT TO GET PUNCHED.
GET INSIDE, BIG MAN! 'LESS YOU'RE DYIN' TO TURN INTO MACHINE CHOW!
ONLY I CAN'T HELP BUT THINK--IF YOUR LIFE TRULY PASSES YOU BY AT THE END...
SLAMM
...THEN WHY'S IT FEEL LIKE I'M RUNNING THROUGH SOMEBODY ELSE'S?
WELL, AIN'T YOU A SIGHT... AVERY SURE CAN PICK 'EM, HUH?
THE NAME'S LUCY--AND I'M SURE YOU'VE GOT SOME QUESTIONS...
BUT AS FOR WHERE YOU ARE RIGHT NOW? THAT ANSWER'S A LITTLE BIT MORE COMPLICATED.

"LET'S JUST SAY YOU AND MY SISTER ARE MORE CONNECTED THAN YOU THINK."
MY NAME'S NATHAN DAYSPRING ASKANI'SON SUMMERS--MOST PEOPLE CALL ME CABLE.
AND AFTER ALL MY YEARS OF RUNNING...IT FEELS LIKE MY TIME'S FINALLY RUN OUT.
THE LAST CALL

THE ONLY HOPE I'VE GOT LEFT IS THE LADY FIGHTING IN MY CORNER--*COMMANDER AVERY RYDER.*
ANY WORD ON THE *COWBOY*, DOC?
AIN'T GONNA LIE, AVERY--EVERY MINUTE HE'S STILL BREATHING IS AN HONEST-TO-GOD *MIRACLE.*
BELLE'S BEEN MONITORING HIS VITALS--THE SHEER AMOUNT OF TRAUMA THE VIRUS HAS INFLICTED ON THAT MAN IS *BEYOND* STAGGERING...


*DOC WHALEN'S RIGHT--WE'VE GOT **SYSTEMIC FAILURE** IN THE LUNGS... EXPANSION OF T/O MESH BY 32 PERCENT...*
DON'T GIVE UP ON HIM, BELLE--HE'S STILL IN THERE...I CAN *FEEL* HIM.
I'VE NEVER MET A MAN WITH AS MUCH *FIGHT* IN HIM AS NATHAN SUMMERS...

"WHEN WE FACED THE CONCLAVE'S TEST-TUBE FREAKS, HE DIDN'T *HESITATE*... HE BOUGHT US THE MOMENT WE NEEDED TO TAKE 'EM DOWN."

NATHAN SACRIFICED EVERYTHING FOR SALVATION BAY...NOW *THE RESISTANCE* CAN HANDLE THE REST.
OUR SCOUTS WERE ABLE TO NAB THE SCHEMATICS FOR THE ASCENDANT TOWER'S *ANTIGRAVITY ENGINES*...
VVVMMM

"FOR YEARS, THE PRIME CONCLAVE TRIED TO ENSLAVE EVERYONE INFECTED WITH THE TECHNO-ORGANIC VIRUS...
"...NOW WE CAN FINALLY BRING THESE @#$@$#% BACK DOWN TO EARTH."
BUT, COMMANDER, THAT'S A SUICIDE MISSION...
MY GOD, AVERY--YOU'RE BURNING UP!
→KAFF← CHAKK HRNN!
SEE, THAT'S JUST IT, DOC...
WHEN YOU GOT MY LIFE EXPECTANCY, SUICIDE IS ONLY A DIFFERENCE IN PERSPECTIVE.
AND IF IT'S BETWEEN THIS AND THE VIRUS...THEN I'D RATHER DIE WITH MY BOOTS ON.
SO IF SUMMERS IS STILL OUT HERE, FIGHTIN' THE GOOD FIGHT...
SMACK
"...THEN I'LL BE DAMNED IF I DO ANYTHING LESS."

STAB MY EYES--I CAN'T BELIEVE I DIDN'T PIECE IT TOGETHER SOONER...
AVERY AND I WERE TELEPATHICALLY BONDED RIGHT WHEN THAT CIRCUS FREAK RIPPED ME APART.
NOW IT'S THAT SAME LINK THAT'S SAVING ME FROM THE GREAT BEYOND.
HEY, LOOK AT YOU, BIG GUY... YOU GOT IT IN ONE!
AHEM... LUCY, YEAH? YOU'RE AVERY'S KID SISTER, RIGHT?
SORRY--BUT DO OLD FOLKS ALWAYS GET THIS SLOBBERY OVER EACH OTHER?
'COURSE, AFTER WHAT HAPPENED TO ME, IT'S HARDLY SURPRISING AVERY WOULD KEEP MY MEMORY ALIVE.
BUT I GOTTA TELL YA...IT SEEMS LIKE MY SISTER'S LIVING IN YOUR HEAD RENT FREE.
JUST BE CAREFUL, COWBOY-- THIS ARRANGEMENT CAN ONLY PROTECT YOU SO LONG...
...'CUS WE BOTH KNOW THAT THE VIRUS TAKES NO PRISONERS!
NNF--!
FWAP!

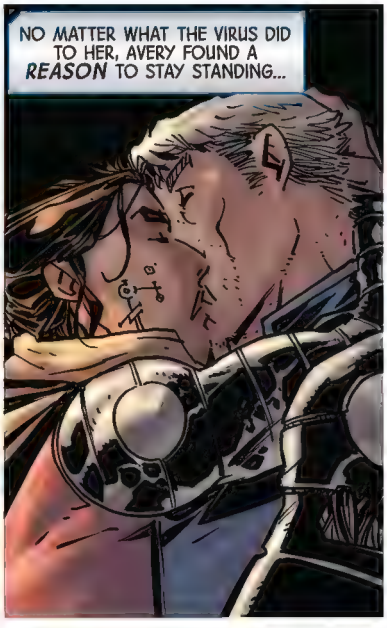
I ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT WHEN THE END FINALLY CAME, I'D FEEL NOTHING BUT REGRET...BUT NOW I SEE HOW WRONG I TRULY WAS.
DO NOT FIGHT THE FUTURE...
YOUR ASSIMILATION IS INEVITABLE!
HRRRNNGG!
IT AIN'T ABOUT THE PAIN...OR EVEN THE FEAR.
OH GOD! SOMEBODY GET THE CRASH CART--WE'RE LOSING HIM!
BEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEP
NO--IN A WORLD FULL OF @#$%@#$, IT ALWAYS COMES DOWN TO ONE THING...
A-AVERY--I'M SO SORRY...
KZT
...IN THE END, ALL THAT MATTERS ARE THE FOLKS WHO LOVE YOU...
KRRZZRZZZRZZZ
...THE ONES WHO GIVE YOU THE STRENGTH TO GO ON WHEN ALL HOPE SEEMS LOST.
ON YOUR FEET, COWBOY...
YOU AIN'T DEAD JUST YET!
KRAKATOOOOOOOM!!!

I'VE LOVED PLENTY OF WOMEN OVER MY LIFE...BUT I'VE NEVER FALLEN AS HARD AS I DID WITH *AVERY*.
COWBOY...?

FTHOOM
FTHOOM
FTHOOM

FOR SO LONG, I ALWAYS FACED MY BATTLES *ALONE*--UNTIL SHE SHOWED ME A BETTER WAY.

SHRANGG


NO MATTER WHAT THE VIRUS DID TO HER, AVERY FOUND A *REASON* TO STAY STANDING...

KRATCH

'CAUSE FOR HER, IT WAS NEVER ABOUT FIGHTING---IT WAS ABOUT *LIVING*.

SHING

AND IF YOU DON'T MAKE THE MOST OF WHAT YOU GOT...THEN MAYBE *THE VIRUS* HAS ALREADY WON.

HNNN--
I--I CAN'T
BREATHE...
WELL,
COWBOY--THAT
WAS QUITE A
SHOW...
BUT DO
YOU THINK YOU
UNDERSTOOD THE
LESSON?

"AFTER ALL, WHAT'S THE
POINT OF SURVIVAL...IF
YOU DON'T GOT ANYTHING
WORTH LIVING FOR?"
C'MON, YOU
BIG BASTARD--
DON'T YOU DO
THIS TO ME...
BEEEEEEEEEEP

I KNOW
YOU'RE TIRED,
SUMMERS--BUT
YOU'VE STILL GOT
A CHOICE
TO MAKE...
...DO YOU
JUST WANNA
CASH IN YOUR CHIPS
AND WALK AWAY...
OR DO YOU
WANNA LIVE?

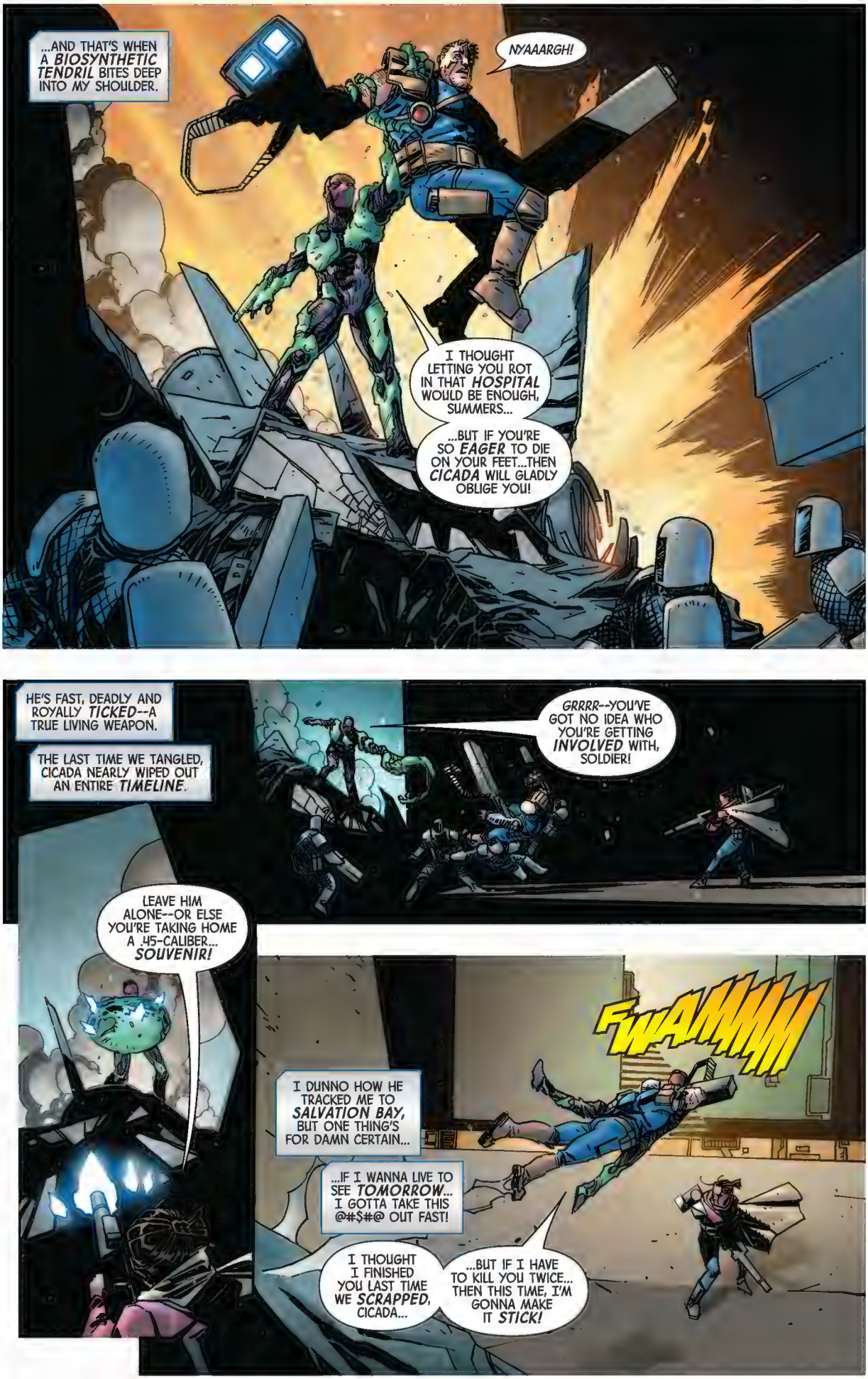
"THERE AIN'T NO
SHAME IN IT--TAKING
SWEET PEACE IN THE
HEREAFTER...

"...OR DO YOU
GOT WHAT IT
TAKES TO FIGHT
ONE LAST TIME?"
DEAR
LORD--THAT'S
IMPOSSIBLE!
BEEPBEEPBEEPBEEP

FOR YOU,
AVERY...? I'D
FIGHT THE DEVIL
HIMSELF.
THEN LIVE,
COWBOY...
'CUS IT SOUNDS
LIKE YOU'VE GOT
BETTER PLACES
TO BE.

DEAR LORD, SUMMERS...YOU SHOULD BE *DEAD!*
YEAH, WELL... TURNS OUT THE *AFTERLIFE* DOESN'T AGREE WITH ME.
"NOW TELL ME, DOC...WHERE THE HELL IS *AVERY?*"
I COULD'VE *SWORN* I FELT SOMETHING--MAYBE WE SHOULD CALL BACK TO *BASE*...
SORRY, COMMANDER--WE CAN'T BREAK RADIO *SILENCE*...
...OR ELSE IT'LL DRAW EVERY ROACH IN THE CONCLAVE TO OUR *LOCATION!*
WE'VE ONLY GOT A FEW MORE *METERS* UNTIL-- *NYARRGH!*
NO!
YOU TECH-RATS ALWAYS THINK YOU'RE SO *CLEVER*...
IT'S A SHAME ALL THAT INTEL YOU'VE GOT...WAS ACTUALLY *OUR* INTEL!
FRAKOWWW

GETTIN' DOC WHALEN TO TELL ME AVERY'S *PLAN* WAS THE EASY PART.
VRRRRRRRRRRRR
STEALING A *CONCLAVE DROPSHIP* WAS A LITTLE BIT HARDER.
SHRAKOOOOOOM!!!
WHAT IN BLAZES--?!
BUT I MADE YOU A *PROMISE*, AVERY...AND I INTEND TO KEEP IT.
NOW I THOUGHT WE HAD AN *ARRANGEMENT*, COMMANDER...
...SO WHY'D YOU TRY TO START THIS *PARTY* WITHOUT ME?
COWBOY--- YOU'RE ALIVE!
YET WHILE THE DUST SETTLES, AN INSECT SUDDENLY *BUZZES* PAST MY EAR...
FWPP
FWPP
FWPP


...AND THAT'S WHEN A BIOSYNTHETIC TENDRIL BITES DEEP INTO MY SHOULDER.
NYAAARGH!
I THOUGHT LETTING YOU ROT IN THAT HOSPITAL WOULD BE ENOUGH, SUMMERS...
...BUT IF YOU'RE SO EAGER TO DIE ON YOUR FEET...THEN CICADA WILL GLADLY OBLIGE YOU!
HE'S FAST, DEADLY AND ROYALLY TICKED--A TRUE LIVING WEAPON.
THE LAST TIME WE TANGLED, CICADA NEARLY WIPED OUT AN ENTIRE TIMELINE.
GRRRR--YOU'VE GOT NO IDEA WHO YOU'RE GETTING INVOLVED WITH, SOLDIER!
LEAVE HIM ALONE--OR ELSE YOU'RE TAKING HOME A .45-CALIBER... SOUVENIR!
FWAMMM
I DUNNO HOW HE TRACKED ME TO SALVATION BAY, BUT ONE THING'S FOR DAMN CERTAIN...
...IF I WANNA LIVE TO SEE TOMORROW... I GOTTA TAKE THIS @#$#@ OUT FAST!
I THOUGHT I FINISHED YOU LAST TIME WE SCRAPPED, CICADA...
...BUT IF I HAVE TO KILL YOU TWICE... THEN THIS TIME, I'M GONNA MAKE IT STICK!

LIEUTENANT-- I HAVE BOTH TARGETS IN MY SIGHTS!
THEN READY THE E.M.P. CANNON, CORPORAL.
DON'T LET ANY OF THESE HERETICS LEAVE HERE ALIVE!
SKIZZZRAKOOM
SUMMERS-- NO!
FRAKOWWW
NYARRRRRGH!
BY THE BRIGHT LADY, I'M STILL TOO WEAK--MAGNETISM IS THROWING THE VIRUS INTO OVERDRIVE...
HRNN...
KZZZ

W-WAIT--
I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE *THINKING*...
Y-YOU DON'T HAVE TO *DO* THIS, SOLDIER...
I *PROMISE* YOU...CABLE DESTROYS EVERYTHING HE'S EVER TOUCHED.
HH--THEN I GUESS THAT'S A RISK I'M GONNA HAVE TO *TAKE*, PAL...
...'CUS TO ME...HE'S ALWAYS GONNA BE *WORTH* IT!
N-NO-- *GRRAAGH!*
H-HAVE TO GET OUT OF *RANGE*...
IF SHE CHOOSES HIM...IT'S GOING TO COST US *EVERYTHING*.
KZZZZZRRAK
GUARDS-- DESTROY THIS *ABOMINATION* AT ONCE!

WHEN YOU'VE GOT A CONDITION LIKE MINE, IT'S ONLY *NATURAL* TO THINK ABOUT YOUR OWN DEATH...
N-NO--AVERY...
...BUT IT'S A SPECIAL KIND OF *HORROR* WATCHING IT HAPPEN TO SOMEONE YOU LOVE.
PZOW PZOW PZOW
VREEE
YOU UNBELIEVABLE *BASTARD*...
YOU COULDN'T LEAVE WELL ENOUGH *ALONE*, COULD YOU?
KNOWING AT THE END OF THE DAY, YOU'RE BOTH SIMPLY RACING TOWARD THE *INEVITABLE*.
RRRAAAAAGH!
SHRAKOOOOM
AFTER ALL MY YEARS OF TIME TRAVEL, IT WAS *AVERY* WHO TAUGHT ME THE MOST VALUABLE LESSON...
FOR WHAT YOU DID TO ME, I *SWORE* I'D MAKE YOU--*EH?*
KZZZT

SHNK
...ABOUT HOW TO MAKE EVERY SECOND COUNT.
NNF--!
SORRY, CICADA...
TURNS OUT YOU WON'T HAVE TO LIVE WITH THE DISAPPOINTMENT!
→KOFF← D-DAMN YOU, SUMMERS...Y-YOU REALLY THINK YOU'VE WON HERE...?
JUST REMEMBER THIS— WHAT'S COMING NEXT...IS ALL ON YOU—※
ALL I WANT TO DO IS COLLAPSE...UNTIL I HEAR THE SOUND OF THE PLASMA BLASTER.
FRAKOOOW!
NYAAAARRGH!

WHEN YOU'VE JUMPED ACROSS HISTORY AS MUCH AS I HAVE, YOUR LIFE BECOMES AN ENDLESS RACE AGAINST TIME.
FTHOOM! FTHOOM! FTHOOM!
HANG ON, AVERY--I'M COMING FOR YOU!
AND WHILE YOU HOPE AND CURSE AND PRAY THAT YOU'RE WRONG...
...SOMETIMES, EVEN A TIME-TRAVELER CAN STILL BE TOO LATE.
OH LORD-- AVERY!
H-HEY THERE, COWBOY...
AIN'T YOU A SIGHT FOR SORE EYES?
EVERY INSTINCT SCREAMS AT ME TO COMFORT HER--BUT THE SOLDIER IN ME KNOWS IT'D ONLY BE A LIE.
T-TELL ME--D-DID YOU SEE ANYTHING... ON THE OTHER SIDE?
J-JUST DON'T WANNA BE ALONE...
MY HEART CRACKS AT THE SHEER INJUSTICE OF IT ALL--WE SHOULD'VE HAD A LIFETIME TOGETHER...
IT'S ALL RIGHT, SWEETHEART--YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE SCARED OF WHAT'S COMING...
...NOT WHEN I CAN JUST SHOW YOU.

I'M SO SORRY, AVERY--BUT IF I CAN'T SAVE YOU...
DEAR LORD IN HEAVEN...
AVERY?!
AVERY, IS THAT YOU?!
...THEN YOU CAN BE DAMNED SURE I'LL TAKE YOUR PAIN AWAY.
OH GOD-- IT'S REALLY YOU...
LUCY!
YOU DESERVE SO MUCH MORE THAN I COULD GIVE YOU, COMMANDER...
...BUT THIS MEMORY WAS THE BEST THAT I COULD DO.
IN YOUR MIND, I CAN STRETCH THIS MOMENT FOR AS LONG AS YOU WANT...
I CAN STAY WITH YOU... RIGHT UNTIL THE END.
NATHAN SUMMERS... YOU REALLY ARE THE SWEETEST MAN, AREN'T YOU?
I DON'T KNOW WHAT I EVER DID TO DESERVE YOU...
...BUT HERE, IN THIS MOMENT...I COULDN'T IMAGINE A BETTER WAY TO GO OUT.
JUST REMEMBER-- YOU DESERVE A HAPPY ENDING OF YOUR OWN, COWBOY...

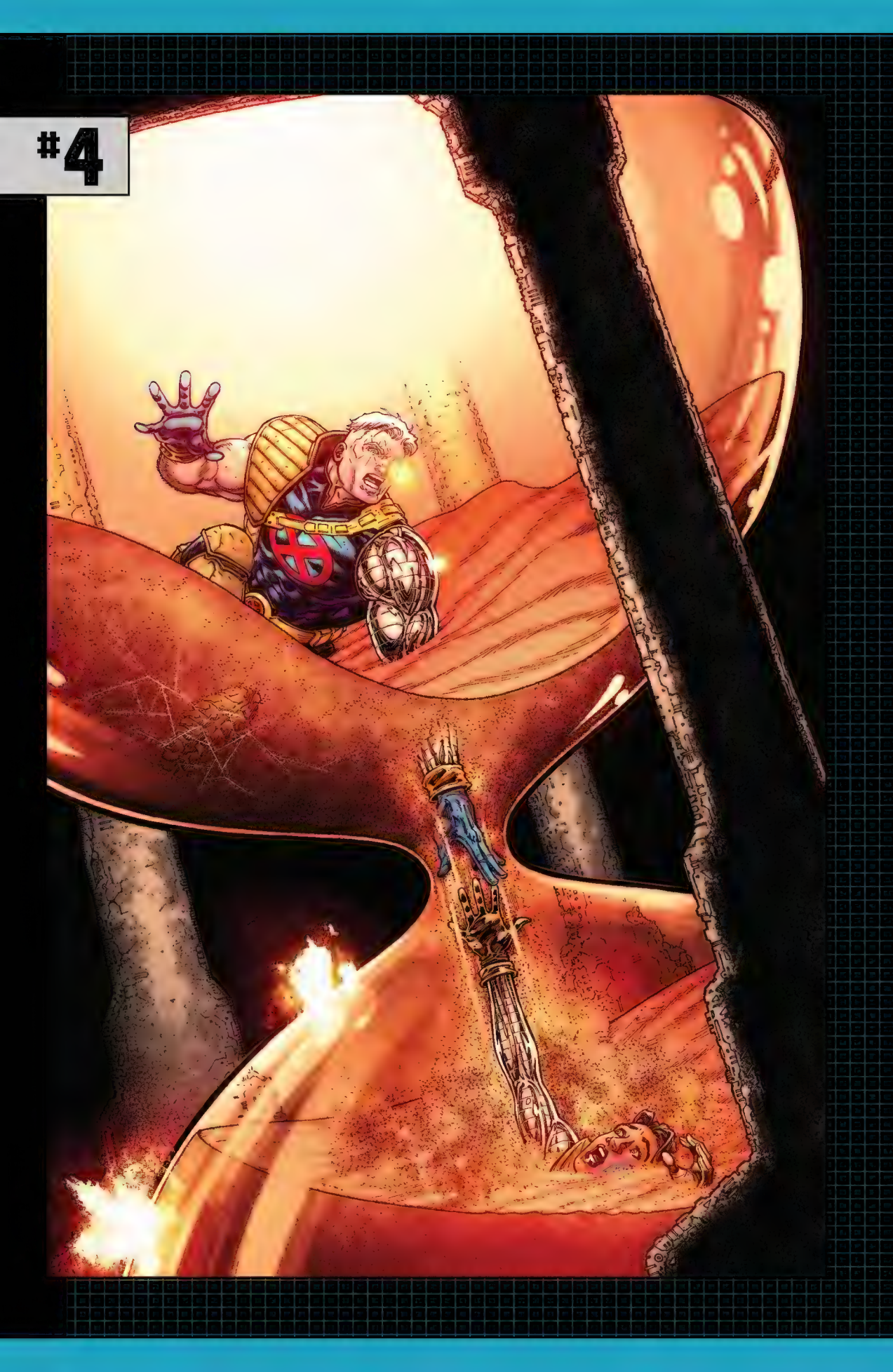
"...SO WHEN YOUR MOMENT COMES...MAKE SURE YOU MAKE IT LAST."

THE CONCLAVE TROOPERS BARK ORDERS AT US--BUT ALL I CAN HEAR IS THE DEAFENING SOUND OF MY OWN *HEARTBEAT.*

ALL MY LIFE, I'VE HELD BACK AN *OCEAN* OF TELEKINETIC ENERGY TO KEEP THE VIRUS IN CHECK...
I'M SO SORRY, COMMANDER...

...BUT AS I FEEL AVERY SLIP AWAY IN MY ARMS... I LET IT OUT WITH A MEGATON *SCREAM.*
RRRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAGH!
FRAKOOOOOM

BOSS--
I'M SO SORRY...
...BUT WE CAN'T STAY HERE ANY LONGER.
I KNOW YOU'RE HURTING--
BUT AVERY WENT OUT A HERO...
AND IF IT WAS BETWEEN YOU OR HER...SHE'D HAVE CHOSEN YOU EVERY TIME.
...
AND THAT'S THE PROBLEM, ISN'T IT, BELLE?
BECAUSE FOLKS LIKE US SHOULDN'T HAVE TO CHOOSE.
SO YOU AND ME--WE'RE REPAIRING OUR TIMESLIDING EQUIPMENT.
AND THEN COME HELL OR HIGH WATER... WE'RE GONNA BRING AVERY BACK.


#4

BOSS, PLEASE...
YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS.

VITALS ARE DROPPING--WE'VE GOT MULTIPLE BLASTER WOUNDS!

I KNOW THAT YOU BLAME YOURSELF FOR WHAT HAPPENED TO AVERY...
...BUT I PROMISE YOU... THIS ISN'T YOUR FAULT.

DOCTOR, T/O PROGRESSION'S AT STAGE FOUR--STARTING CHEST COMPRESSIONS NOW!

BELLE--RUN DIAGNOSTICS ON TRANSLOCATOR HARDWARE.
OPERATIONAL AT 97 PERCENT--BUT YOU AREN'T SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING...?
CH-CHAK

SHE'S BURNING UP--SOMEBODY BRING ME MORE ICE PACKS!

THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME--TIMESLIDE BY ONE...
WE EITHER BRING AVERY BACK...OR WE DON'T COME BACK AT ALL.
KRRZZZRRZKK

DAMMIT--KEEP COMMANDER RYDER STABLE UNTIL I GET BACK!
SOMEBODY NEEDS TO BREAK THE BAD NEWS TO SUMMERS...

WHAT THE--? I COULD'VE SWORN HE WAS HERE...

MY NAME IS NATHAN DAYSPRING ASKANI'SON SUMMERS.
PEOPLE CALL ME *CABLE*--AND IF I'M IN A FIGHT AGAINST TIME...
...THEN YOU CAN BE DAMNED SURE I'LL BE THE ONE CHOOSING THE *BATTLEFIELD*.
A VICIOUS CYCLE

THE LAST TIME I HOPPED INTO THE TIMESTREAM, IT WAS TO STOP A MANIAC NAMED CICADA FROM SLAUGHTERING MILLIONS...
...BUT WHEN YOU'VE LIVING WITH THE TECHNO-ORGANIC VIRUS, THERE'S ALWAYS A CHANCE OF LETHAL COMPLICATIONS.
THAT'S WHEN I LANDED IN SALVATION BAY, A WHOLE CITY OF FOLKS INFECTED BY THE VIRUS... INCLUDING COMMANDER AVERY RYDER.
IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR ME AND AVERY TO GET CLOSE--WE KNEW THE VIRUS WOULD ONLY GIVE US SO MUCH TIME.
RIGHT UNTIL THE END, AVERY FOUGHT TO PROTECT THE PEOPLE OF SALVATION BAY...
...ONLY I COULDN'T PROTECT HER WHEN SHE NEEDED ME THE MOST.

THE ASCENDANT TOWER.
EIGHT HOURS AGO.
IT WAS THE PRIME CONCLAVE'S DEATH SQUADS THAT STOLE OUR FUTURE FROM US.
BUT THIS TIME...I'M GONNA BE THERE TO SET THINGS RIGHT.
SIX AGAINST ONE, YOU CONCLAVE @#$@%...?
HERE'S WHERE I EVEN THE ODDS!
FTHOOM
FTHOOM FTHOOM
COWBOY--YOU'RE ALL RIGHT! BUT HOW...?
AH, YOU KNOW ME, COMMANDER... NOTHING COMES BETWEEN ME AND A PRETTY FACE.
BUT RIGHT NOW, WE'VE GOTTA EVAC YOU OUT OF HERE BEFORE--
NO!
YOUR SICKNESS ENDS HERE, SYNTH-TRAITOR!
NYARRRGH!
SHZRAAK

EVERY RAW EMOTION CRASHES INTO ME AT ONCE--RAGE, HEARTBREAK, GRIEF...
NO--NOT AGAIN...
BEFORE HE HITS THE WALL, I MAKE THIS @#$#-HEAD FEEL EVERY BIT OF IT.
NOT AGAIN!
WHKRUNMG
AND THEN I HOLD AVERY CLOSE...KNOWING IT'S ALREADY FAR TOO LATE TO SAVE HER.
I-IT'S ALL RIGHT, COWBOY--THIS WAS THE DEAL, R-REMEMBER...?
TOLD YA I WASN'T DYING IN SOME HOSPITAL BED...
NOW ALL I CAN DO IS WATCH AS SHE SLIPS AWAY AGAIN--I CURSE MYSELF FOR MY FAILURE...
I--I ONLY WISH...WE HAD MORE TIME---
AND I PRAY I HAVE THE STRENGTH FOR WHAT COMES NEXT.
BELLE... SEND ME BACK AGAIN.
BUT, BOSS--THE RISK OF CAUSING A PARADOX...
I SAID SEND ME BACK NOW!

AND SO I GO BACK...AND MY HEART *BREAKS* ALL OVER AGAIN.
FTTHOOM FTTHOOM FTTHOOM

BELLE-- SEND ME *BACK!*
KRZZRRZZRZZZ

EVERY TIME I REWIND THE CLOCK, IT ALWAYS ENDS THE *SAME WAY*...
PAKK SPANG PZOW

SEND ME *AGAIN*, BLAST IT!
KRNNRRNNRNNN

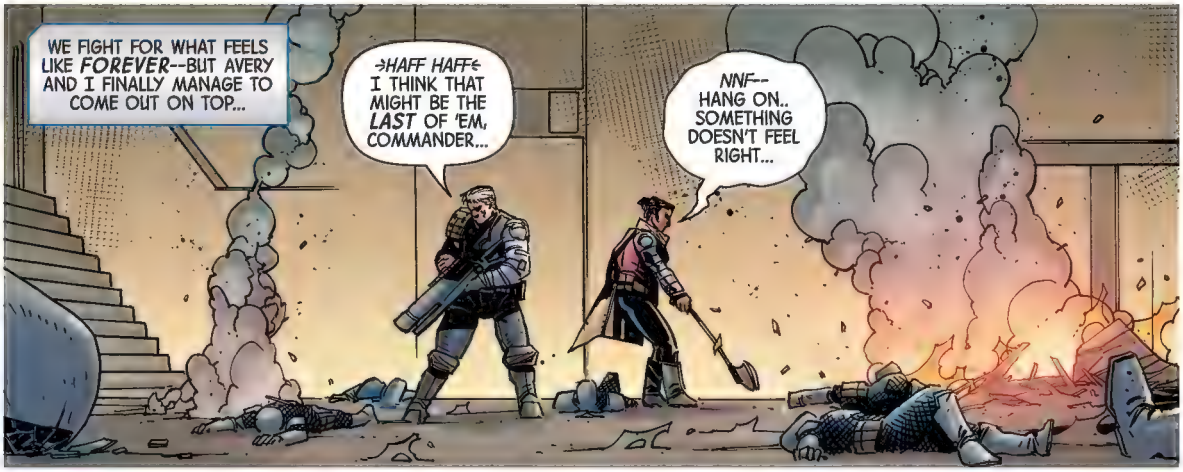
CAUGHT IN A NEVER-ENDING CYCLE OF *DEATH* AND *RESURRECTION*.
BRAKKABRAKKABRAKKA

RRRRR-- *AGAIN!*

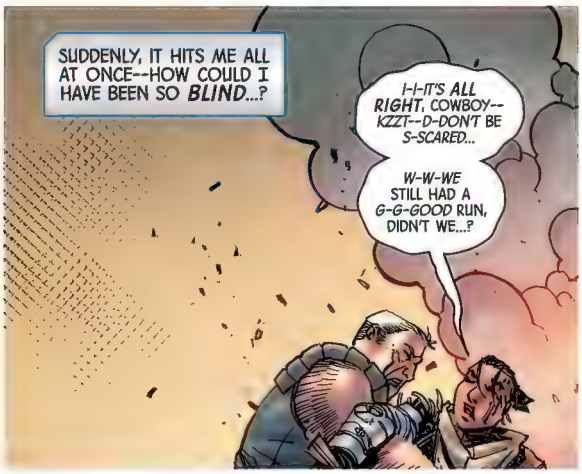
HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I LOST THIS FIGHT? A DOZEN TIMES? A *HUNDRED?*

YOU CAN'T *HAVE* HER, DAMMIT!
DO YOU *HEAR* ME, YOU BASTARDS?!

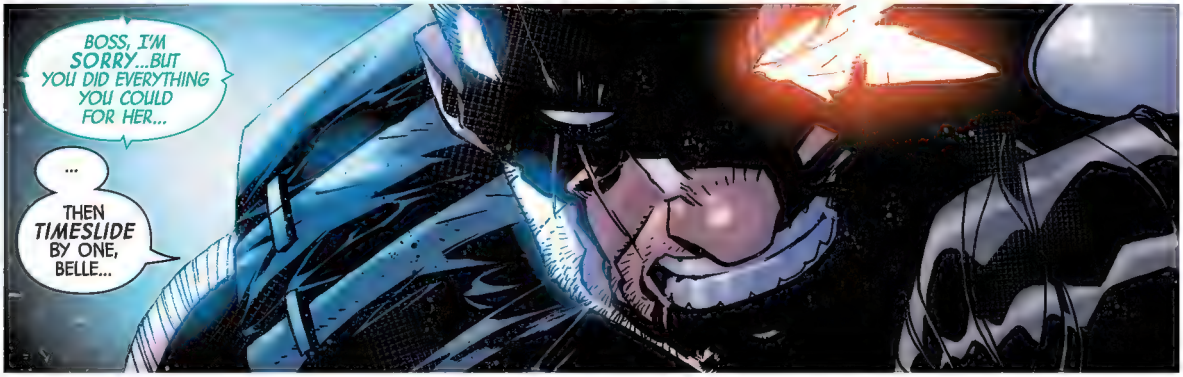
BUT FOR YOU, AVERY...I'LL *ALWAYS* KEEP COMING BACK.
YOU CAN'T HAVE HER!


WE FIGHT FOR WHAT FEELS LIKE FOREVER--BUT AVERY AND I FINALLY MANAGE TO COME OUT ON TOP...
→HAFF HAFF← I THINK THAT MIGHT BE THE LAST OF 'EM, COMMANDER...
NNF-- HANG ON.. SOMETHING DOESN'T FEEL RIGHT...

ONLY TIME ALWAYS FINDS A WAY OF GETTING THE LAST @#$@%&$ LAUGH.
NYAAA11OOO11ARRRRGH!
DEAR LORD-- AVERY!


SUDDENLY, IT HITS ME ALL AT ONCE--HOW COULD I HAVE BEEN SO BLIND...?
I-I-IT'S ALL RIGHT, COWBOY-- KZZT--D-DON'T BE S-SCARED...
W-W-WE STILL HAD A G-G-GOOD RUN, DIDN'T WE...?

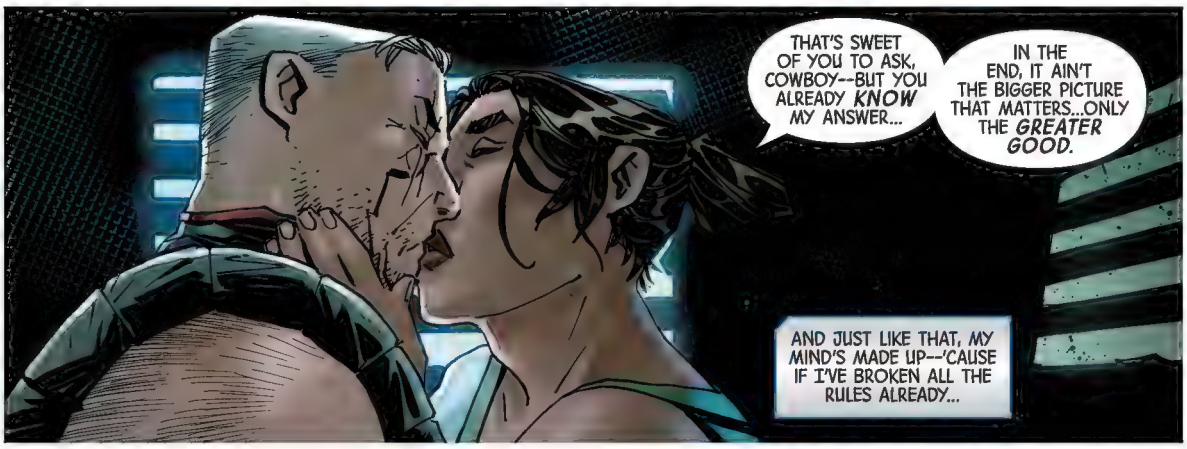
WE COULD'VE BEATEN THE ENTIRE CONCLAVE...BUT THE TECHNO-ORGANIC VIRUS STILL WOULD'VE FINISHED THE JOB.
I--I ONLY WISH... WE HAD MORE TIME...


BOSS, I'M SORRY...BUT YOU DID EVERYTHING YOU COULD FOR HER...
...
THEN TIMESLIDE BY ONE, BELLE...

THE LAST CALL.
SEVEN DAYS AGO.
"IF I'M WELL AND TRULY BEATEN...THERE'S SOMEONE I GOTTA SAY GOODBYE TO FIRST."
NNN-- WHAT TIME IS IT...?
THIS BREAKS EVERY RULE I'VE EVER HAD AS A TIME-TRAVELER.
SONUVA-- IT'S TWO IN THE MORNING...Y'ALL BETTER HAVE A GOOD REASON--
OH...YOU'RE BACK.
BUT MY GOD...IT FEELS GOOD TO SEE HER FACE.
I'M SORRY TO BARGE IN UNANNOUNCED, COMMANDER...
I WAS HOPING YOU AND I MIGHT HAVE A MINUTE TO TALK.
THOUGHT YOU'D LEFT FOR SOME SHUT-EYE BEFORE WE HIT THE REFINERY, COWBOY...
...OR DID YOU MISS ME ALREADY AFTER OUR LITTLE RENDEZVOUS?
AVERY...THE REASON I'M HERE, IT'S GONNA SOUND STRANGE, BUT...
...WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT THE DAY YOU FIRST GOT INFECTED?
SO...YOU'RE STILL THINKING ABOUT THAT CONVERSATION TOO, HUH?
MY STORY'S THE SAME AS MOST FOLKS, I SUPPOSE...

"IT WAS FIFTEEN YEARS AGO, DURING THE NEW YEAR'S OUTBREAKS--LUCY AND I HAD SNUCK OUT FOR A *PARTY*...
"NONE OF US KNEW ABOUT THE *WARLOCKS* BACK THEN...NOT UNTIL THEY'D ALREADY BROKEN THROUGH THE GATES."

EXCEPT YOU DIDN'T COME FOR A *HISTORY LESSON*-- SO WHAT'S REALLY BOTHERING YOU, COWBOY?
YOU ONCE TOLD ME THAT MY POWERS DON'T LET ME PLAY *GOD*, AVERY...
...BUT IF I HAD THE POWER TO *FIX* THINGS... HOW WOULD I KNOW WHEN TO USE IT?


THAT'S SWEET OF YOU TO ASK, COWBOY--BUT YOU ALREADY *KNOW* MY ANSWER...
IN THE END, IT AIN'T THE BIGGER PICTURE THAT MATTERS...ONLY THE *GREATER GOOD.*
AND JUST LIKE THAT, MY MIND'S MADE UP--'CAUSE IF I'VE BROKEN ALL THE RULES ALREADY...

...THEN WHY THE @#$@ SHOULD I STOP *NOW?*
BOSS, I CAN'T LET YOU DO THIS! YOU'RE GONNA DAMAGE THE TIMESTREAM-- KZZT!
DISENGAGE BELLE PROTOCOLS, VOICE COMMAND ONLY-- *TIMESLIDE* BY ONE...

SALVATION BAY.
FIFTEEN YEARS AGO.
"MAYBE THE VIRUS IS UNSTOPPABLE...BUT I CAN STILL CUT THIS BASTARD OUT AT THE ROOT."
LUCY--RUN!
RAAAAARRRRRGH!
RAAAAAIIIIEEEEEE!
A-AVERY, THOSE MONSTERS... THEY'RE GAINING ON US!
OH GOD, LUCY...GET BEHIND ME--!
FTHOOM
FTHOOM
FTHOOM
AVERY--GRAB YOUR SISTER AND GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE...
IF IT'S A FIGHT THESE WARLOCKS WANT...I'LL SHOW 'EM ONE THEY'LL NEVER FORGET!
FTHOOM
FTHOOM
FTHOOM

DAMMIT, THESE WARLOCKS ARE FAST--THE BIG ONE RUSHES AT ME BEFORE I EVEN HAVE A CHANCE TO REACT...
GRRRRAAAAGH!
TSSSSSS
NNF--THAT'S IT, YOU BIG BASTARD...
COME AND GET SOME, @#$%#@#!
...BUT AS THE MONSTER BITES DOWN ON MY ARM, I CAN SMELL ITS CIRCUITRY BURNING--I KNOW THEIR WEAKNESS NOW...
YOU FREAKS CAN'T STOMACH MY STRAIN OF THE VIRUS, HUH...?
THAT'S A DAMN SHAME, THEN...
...'CAUSE I'M ABOUT TO SERVE YOU ALL YOU CAN @#$@%&# EAT!
SPLUTCH
SONUVA--THERE'S TOO MANY OF THEM--!
AVERY-- LOOK OUT!
NO, NO, NO--!
AAAAAAIIIIIIIIIEEEEEEE!

NINE ATTEMPTS LATER, AND EVENTUALLY, I MEMORIZE THE WARLOCKS' PACK FORMATIONS.
AVERY, LUCY--YOU TWO TAKE COVER...
...WHILE I SEND THESE MONSTERS BACK TO HELL!
FTTHOOM FTTHOOM FTTHOOM

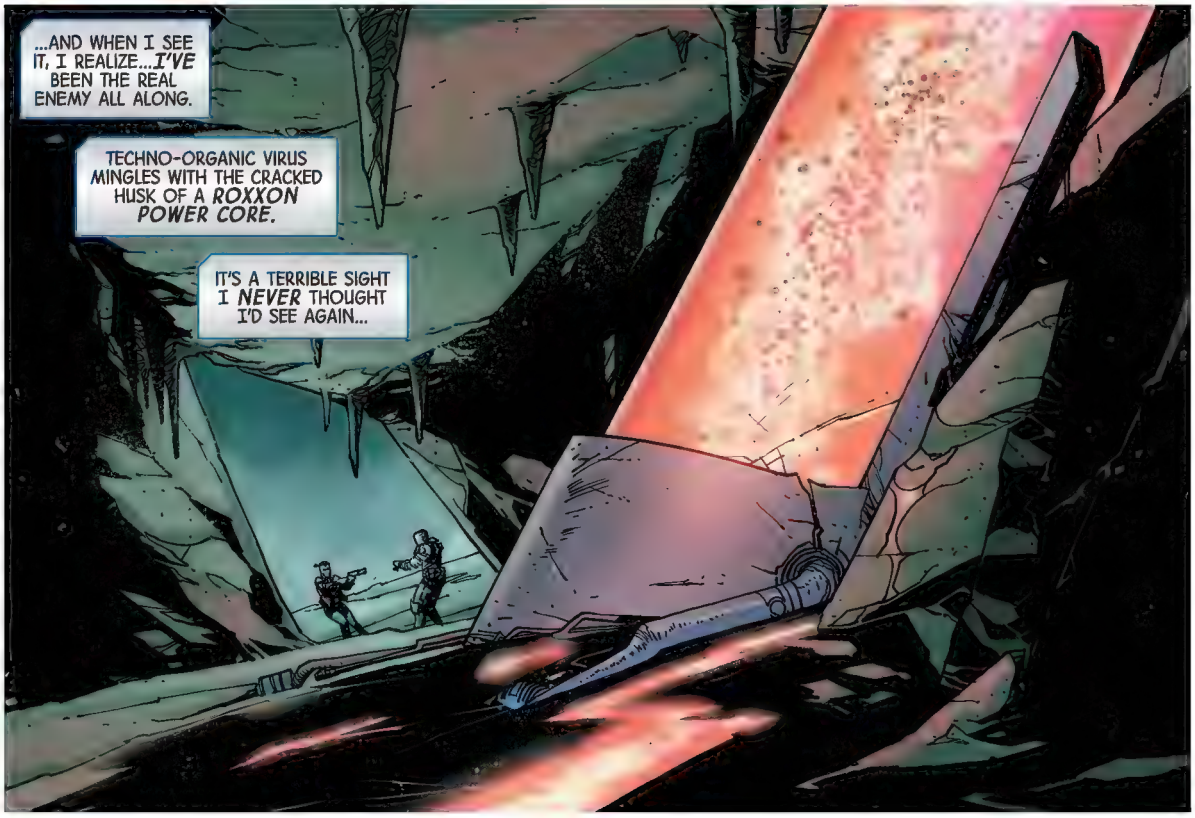
MAYBE IT'S 'CAUSE I'M SO DAMN TIRED--IT FEELS LIKE A CLEAN EXTRACTION AT FIRST...
NO-- DON'T LEAVE ME--!
HRRRRRN!

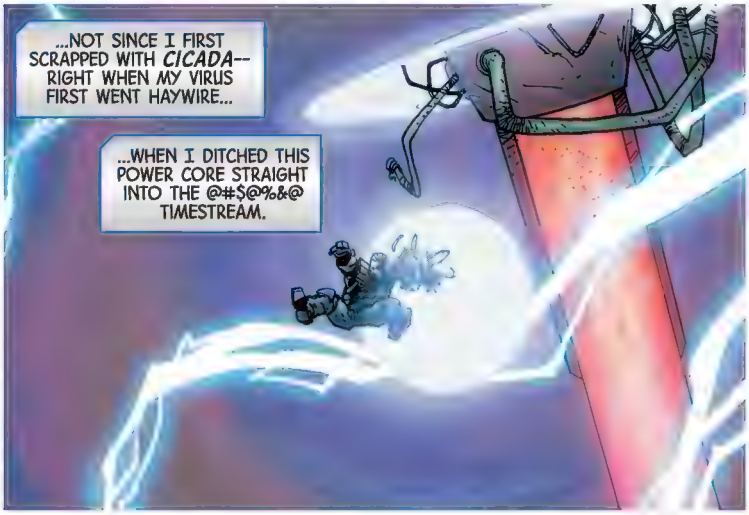
...UNTIL THE VIRUS DECIDES TO CLAIM LUCY AS COLLATERAL DAMAGE.
OH GOD--IT'S BURNING...
IT'S BURNINGGGGGG!
AND THAT'S WHEN AVERY PICKS THE WORST POSSIBLE MOMENT TO SURPRISE ME.
DEAR LORD--NOT LIKE THIS...
LUCY!

ALL IT TAKES IS A SECOND FOR AVERY TO STEAL MY BLASTER.
HANG ON, LUCY...
SHFFT
BECAUSE AT HER CORE, SHE'S LOYAL TO HER SISTER ABOVE ALL ELSE...
I'M COMING FOR YOU!
FTHOOM
FTHOOM FTHOOM
...EVEN AT THE COST OF HER OWN SELF-PRESERVATION.
NO-- AVERY!
AAAARRRRGH!
AND AS HER SCREAMS ECHO IN MY EARS...I SWEAR I CAN FEEL THE TIMELINE LAUGHING.
NOOOOOOOOOOOOO!
BRAKKABRAKKABRAKKABRAKKA

I LOSE TRACK OF HOW MANY TIMES IT TAKES...BUT EVENTUALLY, I FINALLY KILL THEM ALL.
THE WARLOCK HUNTING GROUNDS, THEIR SPAWNING COLONIES...NOW THEY'RE ALL SCORCHED EARTH.
WITH AVERY IN TOW, I HUNT THESE MONSTERS BEYOND SALVATION BAY--'CAUSE IF I CAN ERADICATE THE WARLOCK THREAT AT ITS SOURCE...
YOU OKAY THERE, KID--?
-KAFF- H-HANG ON...
...THEN MAYBE SHE DOESN'T HAVE TO BE MY LIFE'S BIG REGRET.
Y-YOU TOOK ME AWAY FROM MY SISTER, OLD MAN...
IT SEEMS ONLY RIGHT I TAKE YOUR BLASTER IN RETURN.
YRRRRRRRR

BLAST IT ALL, I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG AVERY'S BEEN INFECTED--BUT FOR THE THOUSANDTH TIME, I'M ALREADY FAR TOO LATE...
YOU DON'T *UNDERSTAND*-- I'M JUST TRYING TO HELP--!
SURE, I'LL BE THE JUDGE OF--WH-WHAT THE HELL'S *THAT?*


...AND WHEN I SEE IT, I REALIZE...*I'VE* BEEN THE REAL ENEMY ALL ALONG.
TECHNO-ORGANIC VIRUS MINGLES WITH THE CRACKED HUSK OF A *ROXXON POWER CORE.*
IT'S A TERRIBLE SIGHT I *NEVER* THOUGHT I'D SEE AGAIN...

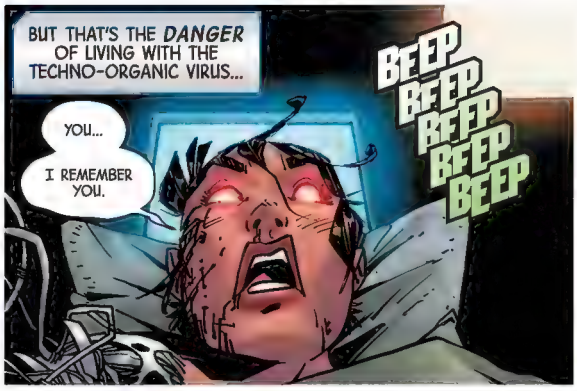

...NOT SINCE I FIRST SCRAPPED WITH *CICADA*-- RIGHT WHEN MY VIRUS FIRST WENT HAYWIRE...
...WHEN I DITCHED THIS POWER CORE STRAIGHT INTO THE @#$@%&@ TIMESTREAM.

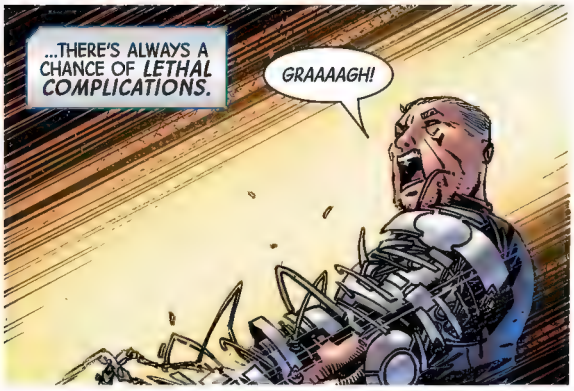
DEAR LORD--THE VIRUS MUST'VE *LATCHED* ON TO THE CORE DURING THE JUMP...
N-NO-- THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING...

THE SICKENING GUILT *CURDLES* IN MY STOMACH, AS AVERY PIECES TOGETHER THE HIDEOUS TRUTH...
THIS WAS *YOU*, WASN'T IT--?
Y-YOU BROUGHT THIS *MADNESS* TO SALVATION BAY...
WHAT HAPPENS NEXT IS SIMPLY WHAT I *DESERVE*.
YOU'RE A *DEAD MAN*, YOU BASTARD!
FTHOOOOM
INSTINCT'S ALL THAT'S KEEPING ME *ALIVE*-- UNTIL A GRIMY MIRACLE CATCHES MY EYE.
WHAT THE--?
TSSSSSS
THE TECHNO-ORGANIC SLIME BURNS AT MY TOUCH...JUST LIKE THE *WARLOCKS*.
TSSSSSS
SUDDENLY, A *PLAN* RACES THROUGH MY MIND--BUT IT HINGES ON ONE CRITICAL ELEMENT...
AVERY-- HOLD YOUR FIRE!
FRAKOWW

...IF I CAN SOMEHOW GET AVERY TO *LISTEN* TO ME.
LOOK, AVERY-- I KNOW YOU DON'T HAVE ANY REASON TO *TRUST* ME...
BUT I SWEAR TO YOU... I AIN'T HERE LOOKIN' FOR A *FIGHT*.
I THINK I MIGHT KNOW A WAY TO *STOP* ALL THIS--BUT YOU GOTTA PUT DOWN THE BLASTER...
PLEASE... JUST GIVE ME THE CHANCE TO *FIX* THIS.
~KAFF~ AFTER WHAT YOU DID TO ME...TO *LUCY*...?
TH-THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY THIS WAS *EVER* GONNA END, @#$@%...
...AND THAT'S W-WITH ONE OF US IN THE *GROUND*.
...
DAMN YOU AND YOUR *STUBBORNNESS*, AVERY...
FINE--THEN *TIMESLIDE* BY ONE...
KRRZZZRRZKRRZZZ!

SALVATION BAY.
RESISTANCE HEADQUARTERS.
"LET'S JUST HOPE THAT YOU LIVE LONG ENOUGH TO FORGIVE ME."
KRRZZZRRZKKRRZZZ
SUMMERS! WHAT IN GOD'S NAME ARE YOU--?
THERE'S NO TIME TO EXPLAIN, DOC--WE ONLY GOT ONE CHANCE LEFT TO SAVE HER...
WHEN THE TECHNO-ORGANIC VIRUS LANDED IN SALVATION BAY, THE STRAIN MUTATED AS IT FELL THROUGH TIME...
PLEASE... JUST LET THIS WORK.
SSSHHLLLKKTT
BUT USING MY TELEKINESIS, I CAN WEAVE MY ORIGINAL STRAIN THROUGHOUT AVERY'S ENTIRE NERVOUS SYSTEM.
AND WITH A LITTLE BIT OF LUCK...MAYBE I CAN BURN OUT HER INFECTION ALTOGETHER.
SHRRRKKT
MY GOD... WE'VE GOT A PULSE!
BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP


BUT THAT'S THE DANGER OF LIVING WITH THE TECHNO-ORGANIC VIRUS...
BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP
YOU...
I REMEMBER YOU.


...THERE'S ALWAYS A CHANCE OF LETHAL COMPLICATIONS.
GRAAAAGH!

NOW IT ALL MAKES PERFECT SENSE--YOU HAVEN'T AGED A DAY SINCE WE FIRST MET, COWBOY...
BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT JUST A MUTANT...YOU'RE A TIME-TRAVELER, AREN'T YOU?
WARNING-- TRANSLOCATOR COMPROMISED!

GAHH--! EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED TO ME...
TO LUCY... NNRR...TO SALVATION BAY...
KRKT
SPAKK
KRNCHH

EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED WAS BECAUSE OF YOU...
...AND NOW YOU'VE TURNED ME INTO THIS!

YOU SHOULD'VE JUST LEFT ME TO DIE IN *PEACE*, SUMMERS...
BUT NOW I REALIZE WHAT MY *TRUE MISSION* HAS BEEN ALL ALONG.
KRATHOOOOM!!!

YOUR TRANSLOCATOR WAS *EASY* TO REPLICATE...
NOW I CAN SEE EVERY TIMELINE...EVERY NEW *POSSIBILITY*.

I CAN HEAR THEM ALL HUMMING INSIDE MY HEAD... LIKE *INSECTS* SINGING.
THE WOMAN YOU KNEW IS *GONE*, SUMMERS-- AVERY RYDER IS DEAD...
...*LONG LIVE* CICADA.

#5

SALVATION BAY. THEN.
LONG BEFORE I BECAME A TIME-TRAVELER, I KNEW TOMORROW WAS NEVER GUARANTEED.
GOT TIME FOR ONE LAST ROUND, COWBOY...?
GROWING UP WITH A TERMINAL CONDITION LIKE THE TECHNO-ORGANIC VIRUS, I ALWAYS FELT LIKE I WAS ON BORROWED TIME.
AND HERE I THOUGHT WE WERE GOING TO DEBRIEF BEFORE WE HIT THE CONCLAVE REFINERY, COMMANDER...
HUMOR ME, SUMMERS--IT'S A SALVATION BAY TRADITION.
YET WHEN I MET AVERY RYDER, MY WHOLE WORLD CHANGED..'CAUSE I FINALLY FOUND SOMETHING WORTH LIVING FOR.
BESIDES...WITH OUR LIFE EXPECTANCY, YOU NEVER KNOW WHICH FIGHT'LL BE YOUR LAST.
AS A SOLDIER OF THE TIMESTREAM, I'VE BATTLED ACROSS THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE--BUT IF I COULD DO IT ALL OVER AGAIN...?
IF I GO DOWN FIGHTING NEXT TO YOU, AVERY...? I CAN THINK OF WORSE WAYS TO GO OUT.
I'D GIVE ANYTHING TO GO BACK TO THIS ONE PERFECT MOMENT WITH HER.
AH, YOU ALWAYS WERE THE SWEET TALKER... SO WHAT'RE WE DRINKING TO THIS TIME?
TO TOMORROW, AVERY...

NOW.
"...AND EVERYTHING ELSE THAT COMES WITH IT."
MY NAME IS NATHAN DAYSPRING ASKANI'SON SUMMERS.
PEOPLE CALL ME CABLE--- AND IF MY LIFE HAS TAUGHT ME ANYTHING, IT'S THIS...
...YOU NEVER REALLY KNOW WHAT YOU'VE GOT UNTIL IT'S LOST.
IF TOMORROW NEVER COMES

DAMMIT TO HELL--I'D THOUGHT THAT IF I SPLICED MY TECHNO-ORGANIC STRAIN WITH HERS, I MIGHT CURE AVERY'S CONDITION...
AVERY, PLEASE--I WAS ONLY TRYING TO PROTECT YOU!
INSTEAD, I TURNED HER INTO MY WORST NIGHTMARE...A DEADLY KILLER NAMED CICADA.
FROM WHAT, SUMMERS...THE TRUTH?
YOU ALWAYS DID CHOOSE THE BIGGER PICTURE OVER THE GREATER GOOD...
"WITH ALL THE TIME IN THE UNIVERSE...YOU STILL SPREAD YOUR SICKNESS TO SALVATION BAY."
BUT NOW I'VE SEEN YOU INSIDE AND OUT, SOLDIER--RIGHT DOWN TO YOUR TRANSLOCATOR DEVICE...
...AND NOW I'M FINALLY GOING TO SET THINGS RIGHT.
VMMMMMMMMMMM

AVERY, I CAN'T LET YOU DO THIS--YOU COULD DESTROY THE TIMELINE!
"LET YOU"--? SEE, THAT'S WHERE YOU'RE MISTAKEN, SUMMERS...
...BECAUSE I WASN'T ASKING FOR YOUR PERMISSION!
SHZRAAAAK
SUDDENLY, ALL THE PIECES FIT TOGETHER--CICADA'S HUNTED ME FROM THE VERY BEGINNING...
VMMMMMMMMMMMMM
...BUT WHILE I REMEMBER ALL OUR SCRAPS...AVERY HASN'T LIVED THROUGH THEM YET!
VOICE COMMAND-- TIMESLIDE BY ONE!
AVERY-- NO!
BOSS-- SHE'S ALREADY GONE!
THEN LOCK ONTO HER SIGNAL AND SPIN ME UP A PORTAL, BELLE...
VMMMMMMMMMMMMM

"...WE'VE GOTTA STOP AVERY NOW--OR SHE COULD BRING DOWN THE ENTIRE TIMESTREAM!"
NUEVA YORK. 2099.
PLEASE, AVERY...THIS ISN'T YOU!
MMMMMMMMMM
THE OZONE SEARS MY LUNGS, AS I PLUNGE THROUGH A SUPERHIGHWAY OF FLYING CARS.
MY TECHNO-ORGANIC ARM SAVES ME FROM TURNING INTO ROADKILL...
NNF--JUST LISTEN TO ME, BLAST IT!
RRRRRAWWWWK
...BUT THAT'S WHEN AVERY PROVES SHE ISN'T PARTIAL TO TAILGATERS.
YOU'RE STARTING TO BECOME A NUISANCE, SUMMERS.
FTHOOM FTHOOM FTHOOM
THE VIRUS HAS ONLY MADE HER STRONGER AND MEANER--BUT SHE'S STILL GOT ONE WEAK SPOT...
BELLE--TIMESLIDE BY ONE!
KRAKADOOM

RUSSIA. 1944.
...SHE STILL HASN'T CRACKED THE LEARNING CURVE OF LEAPING THROUGH TIME.
AVERY, WAIT!
YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU'VE TAKEN US!
I RECOGNIZE THE BATTLEFIELD INSTANTLY--WE'RE CAUGHT IN THE WORST CONFLICTS OF WORLD WAR II.
MAYBE NOT, SUMMERS...
...BUT I ALWAYS KNOW HOW TO SPOT A MINEFIELD!
FTHOOM FTHOOM FTHOOM
SOMEHOW, WE MANAGE TO FIND A WAY TO TURN HELL ON EARTH INTO @#$@.
BOOOM
BOOOM
BOOOM
BOOOM
DAMMIT, AVERY! WE NEED TO STOP THIS!
THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY THIS WAS EVER GOING TO END, SOLDIER...
MMMMMMMMMM

"...AND THAT'S WHEN THEY FINALLY PUT ONE OF US INTO THE GROUND."
WITH EVERY NEW JUMP, THE TIMESTREAM SHUDDERS--AND I FIND MYSELF BARELY KEEPING UP WITH HER.
AVERY STRETCHES PRECIOUS MINUTES INTO HOURS AND DAYS, HUNTING ME MERCILESSLY ACROSS MY PAST...
...AND THE PARADOXES BEGIN STACKING UP, AS HISTORY REWRITES ITSELF VIOLENTLY IN OUR WAKE.
ASKANI HELP ME--I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN STOP HER...
...NOT UNLESS I KILL HER FIRST.

LARAMIDIA.
72 MILLION B.C.E.
THINK, SUMMERS--THERE HAS TO BE ANOTHER WAY...
PLEASE--I'M BEGGING YOU...
...IF I CAN JUST REMIND AVERY OF THE PEOPLE WE USED TO BE.
LISTEN TO ME, AVERY--YOU'VE GOT EVERY RIGHT TO HATE ME...
...BUT I SWEAR ON MY DAUGHTER'S SOUL... I NEVER MEANT TO HURT YOU.
I'M SO SORRY, COMMANDER--YOU MEAN MORE TO ME THAN YOU WILL EVER KNOW...
PLEASE... TELL ME HOW I CAN MAKE THIS RIGHT.
OH, COWBOY...
YOU ALWAYS DID HAVE A WAY WITH WORDS...
...BUT WE'RE WAY PAST TALKING NOW!
RAAAAAAAARRRRGH!

GRRRRAAAAGH!
CHAKK
YOU WERE RIGHT ABOUT ONE THING, THOUGH...
CROSS-TEMPORAL SCANNING AT 99 PERCENT...
CONFIRMED--TIMESLIDE COORDINATES INITIALIZING!
...THIS AFFAIR BETWEEN US NEEDS TO END, SUMMERS...
...NOT NOW... BUT ALL THE WAY BACK AT THE BEGINNING.
VMMMMMMMMM
STUPID OLD MAN--I THOUGHT I COULD STILL GET THROUGH TO HER...
GRRRR...?
...BUT IF THERE'S ANYTHING THAT I'VE LEARNED FROM MY TIME WITH AVERY...
FTHOOOOOOM
...IT'S THAT EVEN IN THE FACE OF EXTINCTION...LOVE MAKES FOOLS OF US ALL.
SPLUTCH
BELLE, SCAN THE TIMELINE--WHERE'S AVERY HEADED?!
OH NO--WE'RE IN SERIOUS TROUBLE, BOSS...

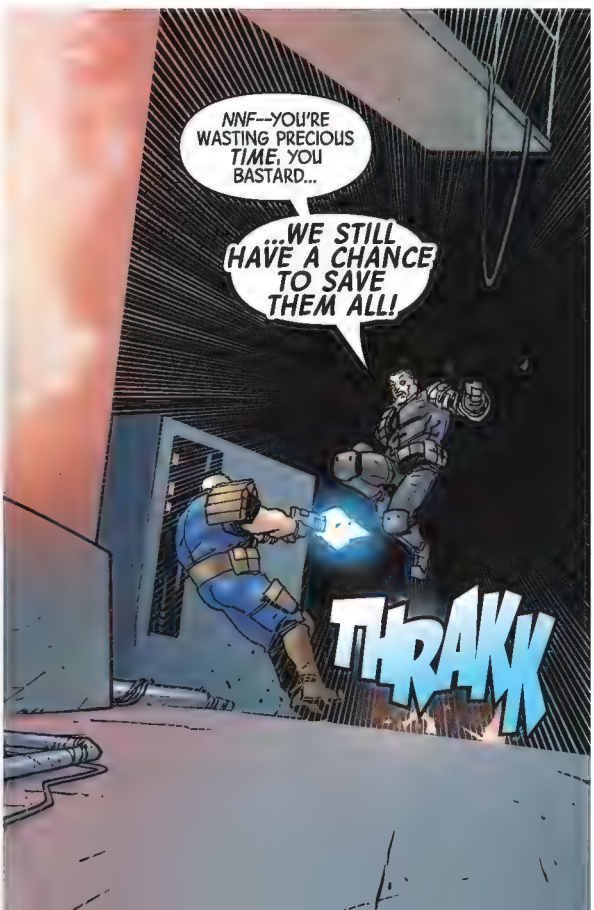
ROXXON TOWER.
3077.
"...SHE'S FINALLY TRACED US BACK...AVERY'S AT ROXXON TOWER!"
ROXXON
REALITY'S SPLINTERING WITH EVERY PASSING SECOND--I PRAY I CAN MAKE IT BACK IN TIME...
YOU SURE TALK A LOT OF #%$#, CICADA...
LET'S SEE IF YOU CAN BACK IT UP!
PLEASE, LORD...JUST GIVE ME TIME TO FINISH WHAT I'VE STARTED.
VMMMMMMMMMMMM
TRUST ME, SOLDIER--UNLESS YOU WANNA BE RESPONSIBLE FOR A WORLD OF SUFFERING...
...YOU NEED TO STAND DOWN NOW!

HE STARES DAGGERS AT ME--RETURNING BACK INTO YOUR OWN PAST IS A CARDINAL SIN FOR ANY TIME-TRAVELER...
LET'S ALL JUST CALM DOWN--I'VE LIVED THROUGH THIS MOMENT ALREADY...
JUST OPEN UP YOUR MIND TO ME, SUMMERS--WE DON'T HAVE TO BE ENEMIES!
...AND I'VE NEVER BEEN ONE TO LET ANYBODY OFF THE HOOK.
BOSS--WE'RE MINUTES AWAY FROM ANACHRONISM...
YEAH, BELLE--AND MY COUNTERPART'S RADIATING TEMPORAL ENERGY LIKE IT'S THE FOURTH OF JULY...
DON'T DO THIS, SON--THIS ISN'T A FIGHT YOU WANNA START.
I DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU'RE FROM OR HOW YOU WERE COMPROMISED, OLD-TIMER...
CH-CHAK
...BUT I MADE A PROMISE TO PROTECT THE TIMESTREAM...
...AND NOBODY'S GONNA STAND IN MY WAY--NOT EVEN MYSELF!
FTHOOM
FTHOOM
FTHOOM

STAB MY EYES--I WAS EVEN *FASTER* ON THE TRIGGER THAN I REMEMBERED...
NO--AVERY--!
NYAAARGH!
FRAKOWW

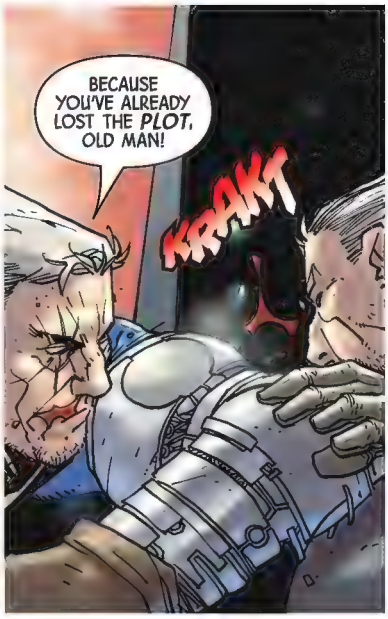
...WHILE I STILL NEED TO PULL MY PUNCHES IF I WANT TO AVOID TRIGGERING A FULL-BLOWN *TEMPORAL APOCALYPSE*.
DAMMIT, KID--YOU DON'T GET WHAT'S AT *STAKE* HERE!
FTHOOM FTHOOM FTHOOM
WHICH *BIT*, OLD-TIMER? THE PART WHERE YOU'RE PROTECTING A STONE-COLD TERRORIST...

...OR THE PART WHERE WE ABANDON THE MISSION AND RISK ALL OF *REALITY* AS WE KNOW IT?!
GRAAGH!
SHRZAAK


NNF--YOU'RE WASTING PRECIOUS *TIME*, YOU BASTARD...
...WE STILL HAVE A CHANCE TO SAVE THEM ALL!
THRAKK

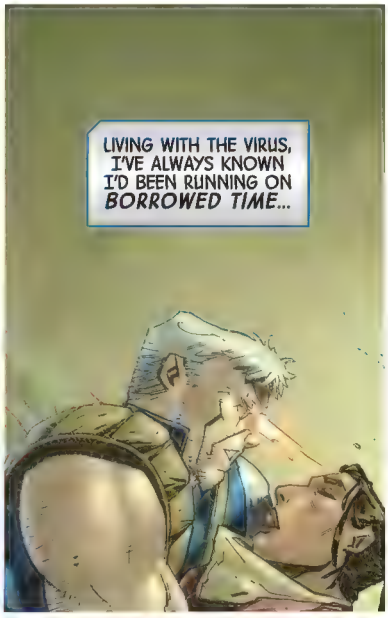
YOU BLASTED, STUBBORN FOOL--WHY WON'T YOU JUST *LISTEN* TO ME?!
SPLAKK

NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE, NOBODY EVER GETS ENOUGH *TIME*.


BECAUSE YOU'VE ALREADY LOST THE *PLOT*, OLD MAN!
KRAK!

FOLKS TEND TO ACT LIKE TOMORROW IS *GUARANTEED*...BUT THEY COULDN'T BE MORE WRONG.

EVERY SECOND YOU'RE STILL HERE...YOU'RE ENDANGERING ALL OF *REALITY!*
THRAKK


LIVING WITH THE VIRUS, I'VE ALWAYS KNOWN I'D BEEN RUNNING ON *BORROWED TIME*...

AND FOR WHAT--BECAUSE YOU'VE FALLEN FOR A *MURDERER?*
NO...

...ONLY IT WASN'T UNTIL I MET HER THAT I LEARNED WHAT IT FELT LIKE TO REALLY *LIVE*.

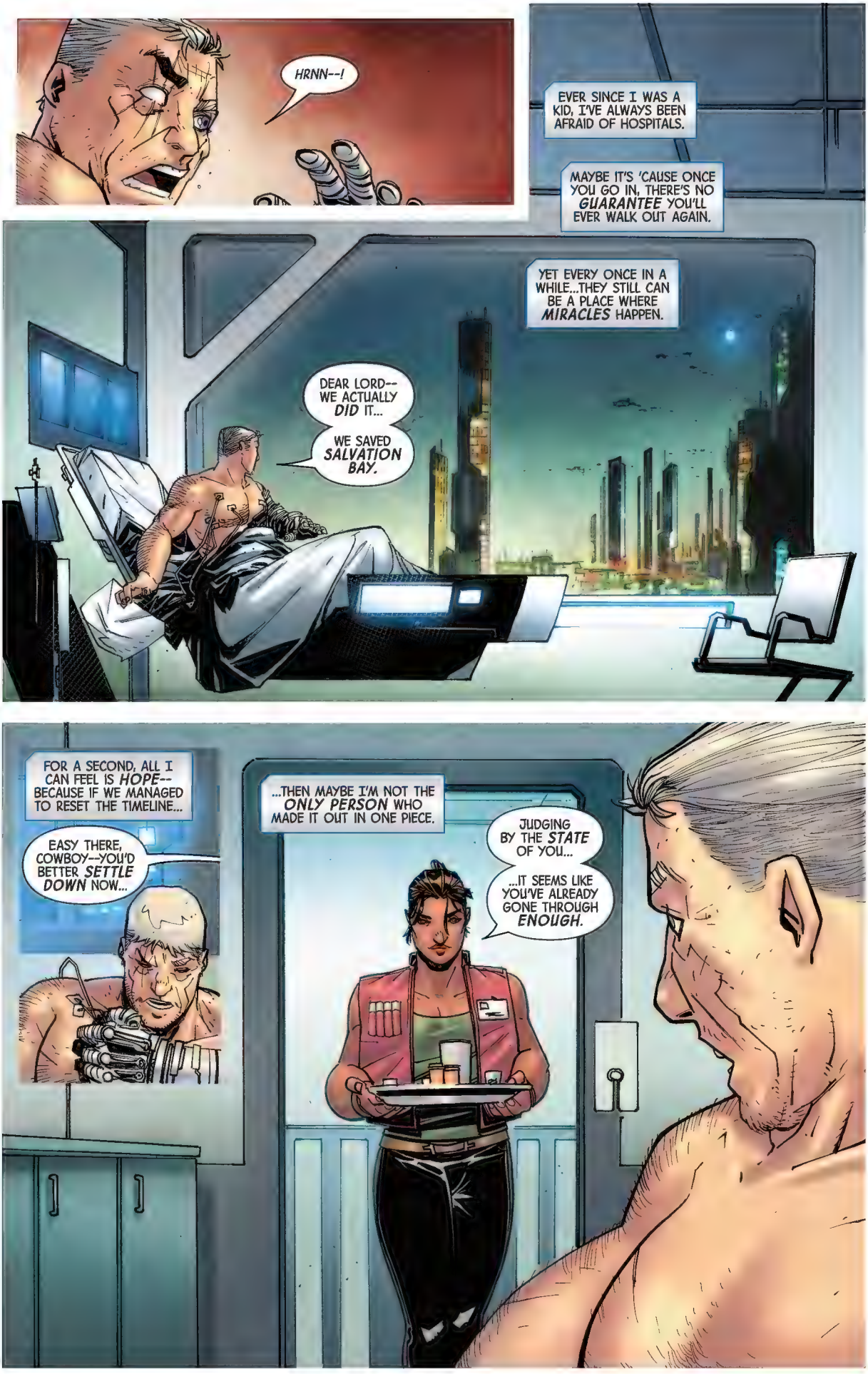
I'M SORRY IT'S COME DOWN TO *THIS*, SOLDIER...
...BUT IT SEEMS LIKE YOUR TIME HAS FINALLY *RUN OUT*.
KLK

IT TAKES HIM ONLY A FRACTION OF A SECOND TO PULL THE TRIGGER...
...YET SOMEHOW... AVERY STILL MOVES FASTER.
COWBOY-- GET DOWN!
FRAKOWWWW
AND JUST LIKE THAT, I SUDDENLY HAVE ALL THE TIME I NEED...
OH LORD-- AVERY...
NOOOOO!
...BUT EVEN AFTER ALL THAT'S HAPPENED...I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN STAND TO BEAR THE COST.
-KAFF-- SUMMERS, WAIT...
DON'T MOVE, AVERY--PLEASE, YOU'VE GOTTA HOLD ON...

N-NO TIME, SOLDIER...
REMEMBER--→KAFF←--WHAT YOU DID TO ME...?
H-HOW YOU SPLICED YOUR VIRUS INTO MINE...?
Y-YOU GAVE ME...THE POWER TO RESHAPE IT...
...AND TO TURN IT INTO A W-WEAPON.
SHRRRRKT
...OH, @#$#.
YOU JUST MADE THE BIGGEST MISTAKE OF YOUR LIFE, YOU SORRY BASTARD...
LUCKY FOR YOU...I STILL HAVE TO SET THIS TO STUN!
FRAKOOOOM

HANG ON, AVERY--I'LL TAKE YOU BACK TO THE RESISTANCE...
NO DICE, SOLDIER--NOT EVEN DOC WHALEN CAN PATCH UP WHAT I'VE GOT...
'SIDES...LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE GOT MORE PRESSING CONCERNS TO WORRY ABOUT.
BOSS, THE POWER CORE--IT MUST'VE RUPTURED IN THE FIGHT.
IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING FAST, MILLIONS OF PEOPLE WILL DIE!
IT'S WORSE THAN THAT, BELLE--WITH THE AMOUNT OF TEMPORAL ENERGY I'VE BUILT UP...
...IF WE'RE CAUGHT IN THIS BLAST...THE WHOLE TIMESTREAM GOES UP WITH US.
TH-THEN IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU ONLY GOT ONE CHOICE TO SAVE US ALL...
...YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO FIND A SAFE PLACE TO DITCH THE CORE.
AVERY, NO--I CAN'T RISK HURTING SALVATION BAY AGAIN...
THIS TIME YOU WON'T, SUMMERS--AND Y'KNOW WHY...?
BECAUSE NOW YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING WORTH FIGHTING FOR.
DAMMIT ALL TO HELL, AVERY... WE SHOULD'VE HAD MORE TIME.
THAT'S JUST IT, COWBOY--IT'S NEVER BEEN ABOUT HOW MUCH TIME WE HAVE...
...ALL THAT MATTERS IS HOW WE USE IT.

AT FIRST, ALL I CAN HEAR IS THE DEAFENING ROAR OF THUNDER CRASHING AROUND ME...
...THEN I REALIZE IT'S THE SOUND OF REALITY TEARING ITSELF APART.
TEMPORAL ENERGY SURGES AROUND ME AS I DRAG THE BOMB INTO THE FARTHEST REACHES OF TIME ITSELF.
THE VIRUS TRIES TO POUNCE UPON MY WEAKNESS-- BUT ALL I CAN THINK ABOUT IS HER.
ALL THE PASSION AND HEARTBREAK, THE WHISPERED SECRETS AND THE DEEPEST TRUTHS...
I FALL ACROSS CENTURIES, BUT AVERY STILL HOLDS ME TOGETHER...
...UNTIL MY WHOLE WORLD VANISHES INTO THE LIGHT.


HRNN--!
EVER SINCE I WAS A KID, I'VE ALWAYS BEEN AFRAID OF HOSPITALS.
MAYBE IT'S 'CAUSE ONCE YOU GO IN, THERE'S NO GUARANTEE YOU'LL EVER WALK OUT AGAIN.
YET EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE...THEY STILL CAN BE A PLACE WHERE MIRACLES HAPPEN.
DEAR LORD--WE ACTUALLY DID IT...
WE SAVED SALVATION BAY.
FOR A SECOND, ALL I CAN FEEL IS HOPE--BECAUSE IF WE MANAGED TO RESET THE TIMELINE...
EASY THERE, COWBOY--YOU'D BETTER SETTLE DOWN NOW...
...THEN MAYBE I'M NOT THE ONLY PERSON WHO MADE IT OUT IN ONE PIECE.
JUDGING BY THE STATE OF YOU...
...IT SEEMS LIKE YOU'VE ALREADY GONE THROUGH ENOUGH.

EVERY EMOTION HITS ME AT ONCE--JOY AND RELIEF CRASH INTO ME LIKE A TIDAL WAVE...
COMMANDER! DEAR LORD--YOU'RE STILL ALIVE!
I'M SORRY, SOLDIER...
AND THEN I SEE THE LOOK ON HER FACE... AND I REALIZE THE TRUE PRICE OF MY VICTORY.
MY NAME'S DOCTOR AVERY RYDER...
...DO WE KNOW EACH OTHER FROM SOMEWHERE?
THE POWER CORE NEVER LANDED IN SALVATION BAY...AND SO THE VIRUS NEVER SPREAD.
AND WITHOUT THE TECHNO-ORGANIC VIRUS... AVERY AND I WOULD NEVER HAVE EVEN MET.
NO...
GOD HELP ME, AVERY'S FINALLY GOTTEN HER SECOND CHANCE...
LISTEN...ARE YOU OKAY? IS THERE SOMEBODY I CAN CALL?
...AND I CAN'T BE THE ONE WHO RISKS TAKING IT FROM HER.
NO-- EVERYTHING'S ALL RIGHT...
I JUST THOUGHT YOU WERE SOMEBODY I USED TO KNOW.

WELL, IF THE LOOK ON YOUR FACE IS ANYTHING TO GO BY...
...IT SOUNDS LIKE YOUR FRIEND WAS SOMEBODY REALLY SPECIAL.
YOU'RE NOT WRONG, DOCTOR-- BUT SHE'D HAVE BEEN THE FIRST TO TELL YOU...
...IT'S NEVER ABOUT HOW MUCH TIME WE'VE GOT WITH PEOPLE-- ALL THAT MATTERS IS HOW WE USE IT.
VMMMMMMMMMMMM
MY NAME IS NATHAN DAYSPRING ASKANI'SON SUMMERS.
PEOPLE CALL ME CABLE-- AND I'M A MAN RUNNING OUT OF TIME...
...BUT I PROMISE YOU, AVERY...I'M GONNA MAKE EVERY SECOND COUNT.
THE END.

Growing up as a child of the '90s, there were few characters who better embodied the action, excitement and attitude of Marvel mutantdom than Nathan Christopher Dayspring Askani'son Summers--known across countless battlefields as the man called Cable.

Having been hooked from the beginning thanks to Louise Simonson and Rob Liefeld's bombastic talents, I felt like I had time-traveled when Tom Brevoort first approached me to write this series. But across his decades of wild continuity, I had to ask myself--who is Cable? The X-Men have other characters with big guns. They have other telepaths, other time-travelers. So what is it about Nathan Summers that sets him apart from all the rest?

To me, it was that every day of his life, Cable had to fight just to stay alive.

Before the Legacy virus and M-Pox, Cable was the X-Man who battled a terminal condition known as the Techno-Organic virus. Infected as a child, this became a core staple of Cable as a character, one that could easily parallel everyday people who managed chronic illnesses like cancer, leukemia, or Parkinson's. The T/O virus was also the heart of my favorite Cable stories as a kid, from his post-Magneto recovery after Fatal Attractions in the pages of X-FORCE, or the powerful family moments in THE ADVENTURES OF CYCLOPS AND PHOENIX.

Yet it's also a condition that has left Cable unquestionably alone. He was sent to the future in the hope of managing his condition. It's a disease that's nearly killed him many times. And while he's had many loved ones in his life--Jenskot, Domino, Esme Cuckoo, his daughter, Hope, the extended Summers clan, and all his protégés from X-Force--the Techno-Organic virus has always been a fight that has come down to him alone.

But what if it didn't?

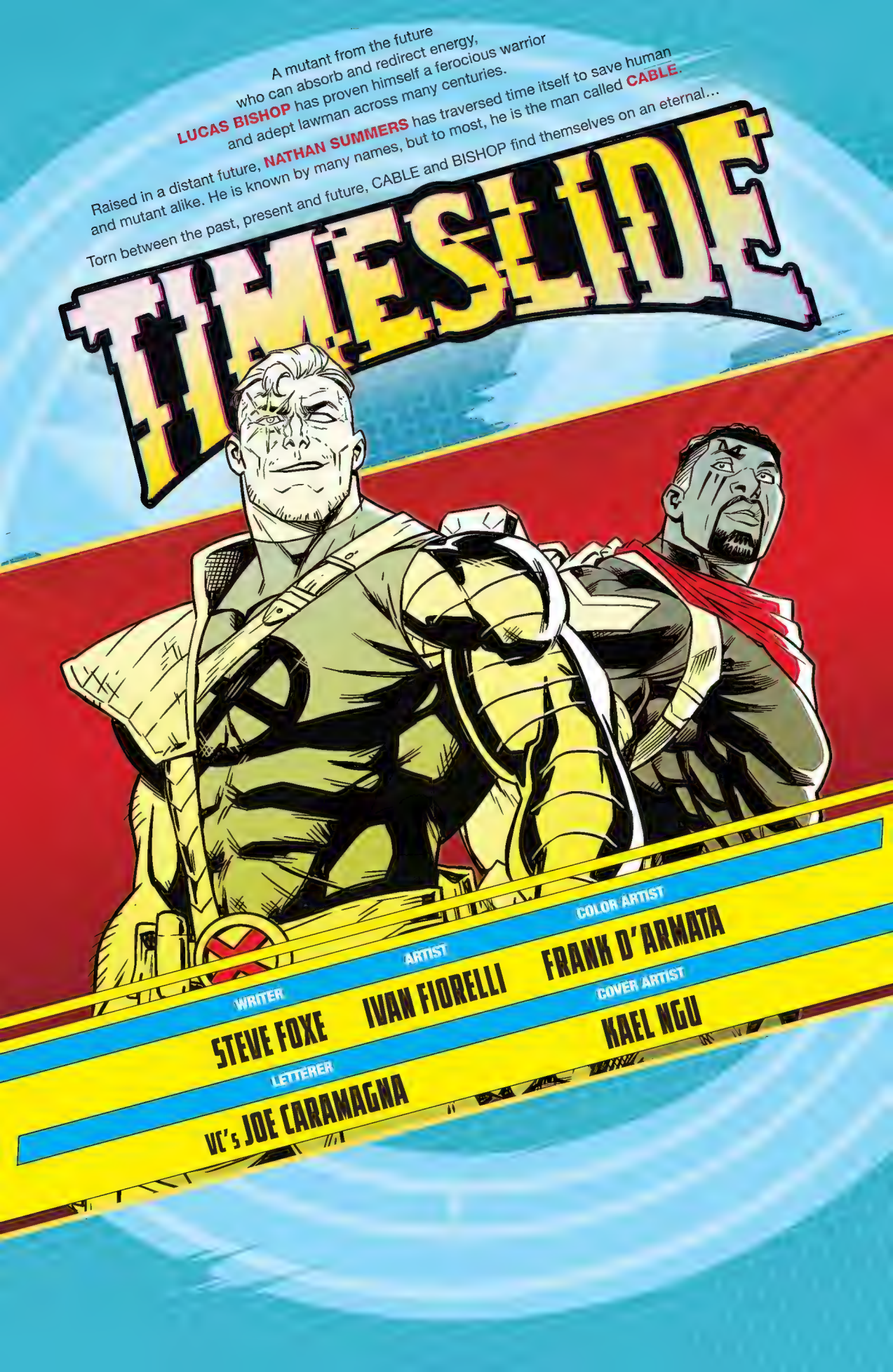
Early in my conversations with Tom, it became clear that this book didn't have to be a tragedy…but could be a redemptive love story too. And that's what CABLE: LOVE & CHROME represents to me--what happens to Cable when his lifelong battle to survive suddenly becomes a journey shared. Introducing Avery Ryder to Cable's mythology has been such a treat, and after many years of appreciating his art, I couldn't be more thrilled to be working with the sensational Mike Henderson to tell you this story that I'd lovingly pitched as *Edge of Tomorrow* meets *The Fault in Our Stars*…with the Techno-Organic virus.

Of course, we'll still be bringing all the big guns, big action and big attitude that every good Cable story demands--but there's been something truly fulfilling about digging into Nathan Summers as a hero and finding out what a larger-than-life character like him can offer readers like us. I think that's what we've discovered here--because as Cable would be the first to tell you, the most precious gift any of us has is time.

Thanks for spending yours with us.

David Pepose
October 2024

TIMESLIDE #1


A mutant from the future
who can absorb and redirect energy,
LUCAS BISHOP has proven himself a ferocious warrior
and adept lawman across many centuries.
Raised in a distant future, NATHAN SUMMERS has traversed time itself to save human
and mutant alike. He is known by many names, but to most, he is the man called CABLE.
Torn between the past, present and future, CABLE and BISHOP find themselves on an eternal...
TIMESLIDE
WRITER
STEVE FOXE
ARTIST
IVAN FIORELLI
COLOR ARTIST
FRANK D'ARMATA
LETTERER
VC's JOE CARAMAGNA
COVER ARTIST
KAEL NGU

NEW YORK CITY.
I'VE BEEN A LOT OF THINGS OVER A LOT OF YEARS.
GREAT CAPTAIN OF KRAKOA. X-MAN. ZEALOT FOR A MISGUIDED CAUSE.
AHH--
BUT BEFORE ALL OF THEM, I WAS A COP.
THAT WORD HAS A LOT OF NEGATIVE CONNOTATIONS THESE DAYS, ESPECIALLY FOR PEOPLE WHO LOOK LIKE ME.
Struggle if you'd like. It makes your marrow all the sweeter.
FAR AS I'M CONCERNED? BEING A COP JUST MEANS TWO THINGS...

...PROTECTING THE INNOCENT AND *TAKING DOWN* THE #$%& WHO DESERVE IT.
CLAWS OFF THE KID, *EMPLATE.*
FWUMM
Guhhh!

AND EMPLATE DESERVES IT MORE THAN MOST. HE'S AN ENERGY VAMPIRE--REQUIRES MUTANT LIFE FORCE TO SURVIVE.
ACCEPTED AMNESTY ON KRAKOA. HASN'T KEPT UP HIS GOOD BEHAVIOR.
CRACK
GET OUT OF HERE, KID.
TH-THANK YOU.
SHHNK
IN MY FUTURE, HE SPREAD HIS NEED TO FEED LIKE A PLAGUE. MY SISTER WAS ONE OF HIS VICTIMS.
SO A BIG PART OF ME IS SCREAMING TO BLOW HIS HEAD OFF HERE AND NOW.
BUT I DO THINGS BY THE BOOK. MOSTLY.
I'VE BEEN KEEPING TABS ON EVERYONE WHO "REFORMED." SEEING HOW WELL IT STUCK.
Your island is gone, Bishop. And I still need succor.

HNHH!
SMACK
EMPLATE'S BEEN EATING WELL--HE'S STRONG. MEANS HE'S LEFT A LOT OF DEAD MUTANTS IN HIS WAKE.
I'D CONSIDER THAT JUST CAUSE.
BAD NEWS FOR YOU, ST. CROIX--I DON'T NEED MY WEAPON TO BE A WEAPON.
I GOT PLENTY OF ENERGY STORED UP. LET'S SEE HOW MUCH YOU CAN TAKE.
Hrrghh.
Perhaps you will finally satiate my hunger.
HUH?

WHO HIT THE PAUSE BUTTON ON THIS NASTY SONOFA--!
THAT'D BE ME. POPPED HIM IN A TIME BUBBLE.
I'M SURE YOU HAD HIM RIGHT WHERE YOU WANTED HIM, BUT WE DON'T REALLY HAVE THE SECONDS TO SPARE RIGHT NOW.
I NEED YOUR HELP TO KEEP MUTANTKIND FROM BEING EATEN AWAY FROM THE TIMESTREAM ITSELF.
APPRECIATE THE ASSIST, BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO FORGIVE ME FOR BEING CAUTIOUS.
LAST I KNEW, YOU WERE IN THE WHITE HOT ROOM AND LOOKED A BIT DIFFERENT...

...TEMPUS.
I'M STILL THERE, FROM YOUR PERSPECTIVE--OR WAS, FROM MINE. IT'S BEEN A FEW YEARS. YOU SHOULD KNOW BETTER THAN ALMOST ANYONE THAT TENSES GETS WEIRD WHEN YOU'RE A TIME-TRAVELER.
JUDGING BY YOUR REACTION, THOUGH, THIS MUST BE JUST AFTER THE FIRST KRAKOAN ERA.
GOOD--ANY EARLIER AND I'D BE OUT OF LUCK.
CARE TO ELABORATE ON THAT LAST BIT?
NOT YET. MY ABILITY TO AIM JUMPS IS ALREADY DESTABILIZING. AND WE HAVE OTHER PLACES AND TIMES TO BE.
WHAT ABOUT EMPLATE?
OH, HE'LL STAY THERE AS LONG AS I WANT. FOREVER, EVEN. NOW COME ON...
WE HAVE ONE MORE PERSON TO RECRUIT, AND MY BEST BET IS THAT HE'S CURRENTLY SOMEWHEN AROUND THE YEAR 3077.
GREAT. WONDER WHO THAT COULD BE.

WHAT IS THIS-- WHAT AM I SEEING?
I TOLD YOU--*TIME IS FRAYING.*
NORMALLY, TIME KIND OF JUST...FALLS APART AND COMES BACK TOGETHER FOR ME. ALL OF THESE GLIMPSES OF OTHER MOMENTS?
YOUR GUESS IS AS GOOD AS MINE IF THEY'LL HAPPEN OR NOT.

MAN, LET'S HOPE SOME OF THOSE DON'T.
FOR YOUR SAKE, TRY NOT TO REMEMBER THEM. IT'S BETTER THAT WAY.
YOU EVEN TWITCH WRONG AND YOU WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT REMEMBERING ANYTHING.
SALVATION BAY. 3077.
WE'VE HAD MORE THAN ENOUGH OF CONCLAVE TROOPS LIKE YOU.
LADY, I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU THINK WE ARE, BUT--
STAND DOWN, AVERY.*
BISHOP'S NOT ALWAYS THE ENEMY--EVEN THOUGH HE CARRIES A BADGE.
*FIND OUT MORE ABOUT AVERY, SALVATION BAY AND THE THREAT OF THE CONCLAVE IN CABLE: LOVE AND CHROME #1, ON SALE IN JANUARY!

BOLD STUNT, BISHOP--SHOWING UP ON MY DOORSTEP WITH ONE OF *MY DAUGHTER'S* FRIENDS.
ISN'T THE AUSSIE THERE SUPPOSED TO BE IN THE WHITE HOT ROOM?
YOU'RE ASKING THE SAME QUESTIONS I DID, *CABLE.*
GUESS YOU WEREN'T ANY GOOD AT GETTING ANSWERS, THEN?
WE DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS MACHO POSTURING-- AND YOUR GIRLFRIEND DOESN'T NEED TO HEAR WHAT I'M ABOUT TO SAY.
HEY NOW--
I RISKED *EVERYTHING* TO COME FIND YOU.
YOU'RE THE *ONLY TWO MUTANTS* WHO'VE SUCCESSFULLY REPELLED WHAT WE'RE UP AGAINST...
...AND *YOU'RE HALF THE REASON* THEY HATE US AS MUCH AS THEY DO.
#$%&.
THE CHILDREN.

NOT LONG AGO IN YOUR ERA, THE CHILDREN OF THE VAULT TRIED TO TAKE OVER THE WORLD VIA SUBLIMINAL MESSAGING AND A VIRUS THAT MADE MANKIND SUSCEPTIBLE TO THEIR INFLUENCE.
THEY'RE AN ENTIRE CITY OF HYPER-ADVANCED HUMANS SUBJECTED TO THOUSANDS OF YEARS OF ARTIFICIAL EVOLUTION--
--AND JUST THE TWO OF YOU HANDED THEM THEIR ASSES.
"THAT REALLY PISSED THEM OFF.
"AND IN MY FUTURE, THE CHILDREN REOPENED THE DOORS TO THE VAULT AND INTRODUCED A NEW CHILD TO THE WORLD.
"VACUNA-- THEIR ANTIDOTE TO THE 'VIRUS' OF MUTANTKIND.
"THEY STARTED WORK ON HIM FIFTEEN MINUTES AFTER YOU DEFEATED THEM.

"VACUNA IS A CHRONAL TUNNELER--HE CAN MAKE HIS WAY THROUGH THE TIMESTREAM AT WILL.
"HIS HYPER-SENSES DRAW HIM TOWARD PIVOTAL TIMES IN THE HISTORY OF MUTANTKIND--TURNING POINTS FOR THE SPECIES.
"AND HE CONSUMES THE MOMENTS THEMSELVES, REMOVING THEM FROM THE TIMESTREAM ENTIRELY.
VRRRSSSSHHHHH
"THE CHILDREN HAVE EXCEEDED THEIR REACH--TIME IS TRYING TO REPAIR ITSELF. BUT VACUNA'S ACTIONS HAVE SCREWED WITH EVERYTHING.
"ANYONE CONNECTED TO THE TIMESTREAM CAN FEEL IT COMING APART AT THE SEAMS.
"THE ONLY THING WE HAVE GOING FOR US IS THAT LINEAR ACTION ALONE WON'T BE ENOUGH.
"VACUNA'LL HAVE TO CONSUME ENOUGH PIVOTAL MOMENTS TO REACH A TIPPING POINT BEYOND WHICH THE TIMESTREAM WILL NO LONGER BE ABLE TO CORRECT FOR THE PRESENCE OF MUTANTS THROUGHOUT HISTORY."

I PROGRAMMED THESE TIMESLIDERS WITH CHRONAL SIGNATURES FROM MY ERA--YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO TRACK VACUNA, BUT IT SHOULD GIVE YOU SOME WARNING WHEN HE'S NEAR.
IT'S UP TO YOU TWO TO FIGURE OUT THE TURNING POINTS THAT ARE LEFT AND INTERCEPT HIM WHILE WE STILL HAVE TIME.
THIS LOOKS LIKE THE TECH IN MY ARM.
THIS THE FIRST TIME YOU'VE SENT A VERSION OF BISHOP AND ME ON THIS SUICIDE RUN?
IS KNOWING THE ANSWER TO THAT GOING TO MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER OR WORSE ABOUT GOING AFTER THE MONSTER TRYING TO ERASE OUR ENTIRE EXISTENCE?
NOW LISTEN UP--THE CHILDREN REFINED VACUNA OVER HUNDREDS OF GENERATIONS. THEY BRED OUT NEARLY EVERY CONCEIVABLE WEAKNESS.
BUT IF YOU CAN WEAR HIM DOWN, ACTIVATE A BEACON TO CALL ME AND KEEP HIM IN PLACE? I CAN CATCH HIM IN THE MOTHER OF ALL TIME BUBBLES.
YOU'RE STRONG ENOUGH TO HOLD HIM?
I'LL HAVE TO STAY INSIDE IT WITH HIM. BUT ONE MUTANT IS WORTH OUR ENTIRE HISTORY.
SAVE THE HEROIC-SACRIFICE TALK. WE CAN TAKE HIM.
CABLE'S BEING AN ASS ABOUT IT, BUT HE'S RIGHT. WE'LL FIND ANOTHER WAY.

HOW VALIANT. NOW, SAY YOUR GOODBYES AND GET MOVING.
TIME IS IN SHORT SUPPLY.
YOU GOING TO BE OKAY HERE WITH THE STANDARD ARSENAL?
I COULD TAKE ON THE CONCLAVE WITH A SLINGSHOT IF I HAD TO.
GOOD, BECAUSE WE'VE GOT ONE MORE STOP TO MAKE BEFORE I GO.
JUST MAKE SURE YOU COME BACK.
SHORTLY, NEARBY.
NICE ORDNANCE.
YOU KNOW, SOMETIMES I THINK WE COULD BE FRIENDS, AFTER ALL.
DON'T KID YOURSELF, LAWMAN.
BELLE, TIMESLIDE BY TWO.
HEY--

WESTCHESTER, NEW YORK.
THE NOT-TOO-DISTANT PAST.
--WANT TO FILL ME IN ON WHICH PIVOTAL MOMENT WE'RE AIMING FOR HERE?
SHOULD BE OBVIOUS. THOUGHT YOU GREW UP A REAL X-MEN FANBOY.
I'D PULL THAT HAND BACK REAL FAST IF I WERE YOU.
STAY DOWNWIND AND KEEP QUIET.
WHAT ARE YOU--?
CRACK-
CRASH
AH @#$%. WOLVERINE. COULD HAVE WARNED ME TO BRING PSI-BLOCKERS.
DON'T WORRY...

"...I THINK MY MOM'S TOO BUSY LOSING HER DAMN MIND TO THE DARK PHOENIX TO SENSE US."
WHAT A PITY, HANK. I'VE OVERLOADED YOUR PRECIOUS SCRAMBLER.
THIS WAS AN ADMIRABLE PLOY, X-MEN...
...BUT A PLOY THAT FAILED.
YOU'RE ICE-COLD, NATE.
I DON'T THINK I COULD SEE MY FOLKS LIKE THAT AND NOT FLINCH.
GUESS WE'RE BUILT DIFFERENT. WE FLINCH--WE LOSE.
WE CAN'T LOSE. DON'T GET IT TWISTED.
I'LL BE READY FOR THAT @#$% WHEN HE SHOWS UP.
ALTHOUGH... I THINK SOMETHING'S ALREADY WRONG WITH THE TIMESTREAM HERE.
CHECK OUT THE X-MEN JEAN'S GOT IN HER GRIP OVER THERE. THAT ROSTER SEEM OFF TO YOU?

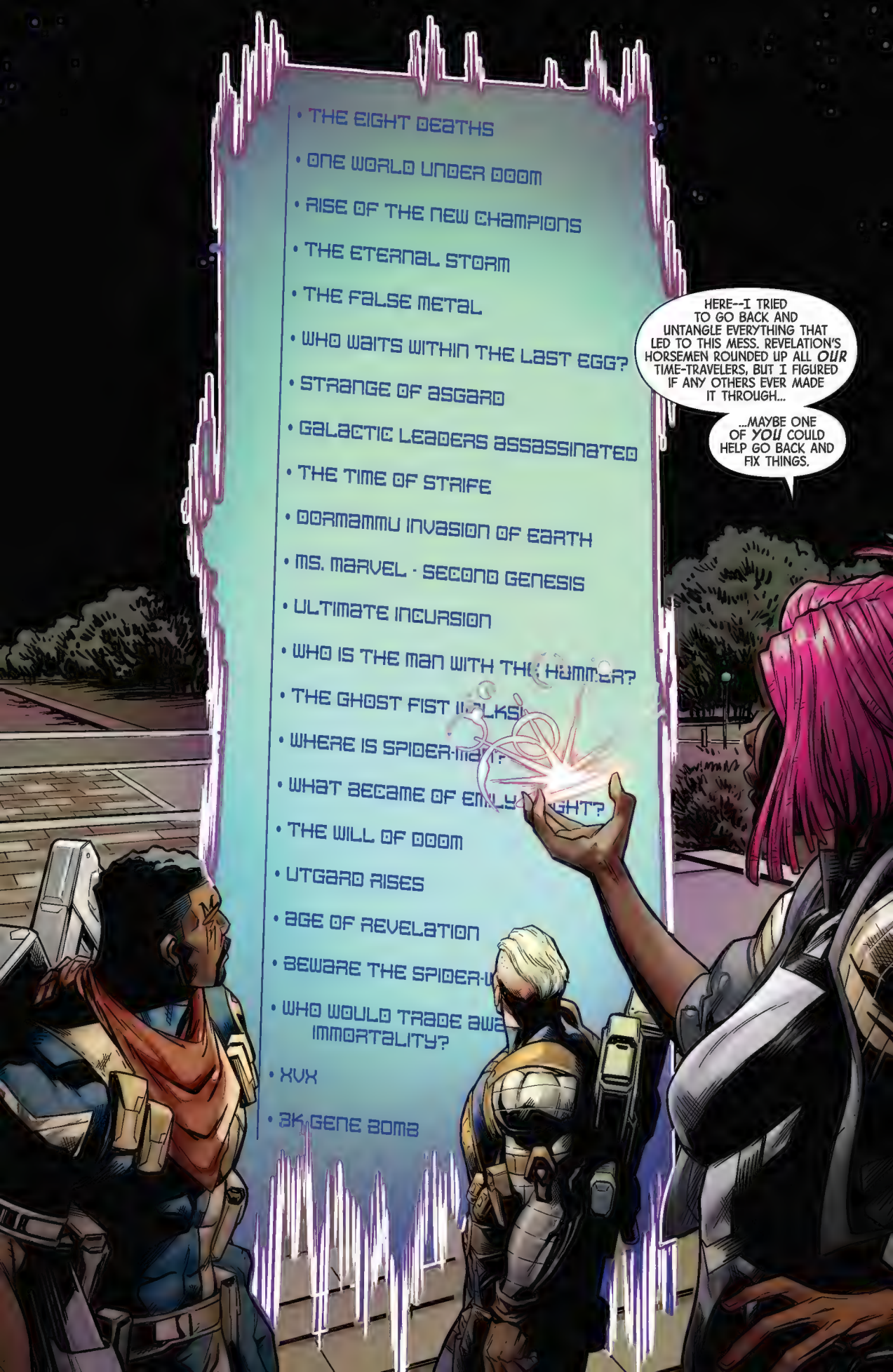
JEAN--I KNOW YOU CAN FIGHT THIS! YOU DON'T HAVE TO LET SOME OUTER-SPACE SPICY CHICKEN MESS WITH YOUR HEAD!
OH, KAMALA. I FOUND YOUR YOUTHFUL FOLLY CHARMING ONCE UPON A TIME. BUT NO LONGER!
"WHAT THE HELL IS MS. MARVEL DOING HERE?"
PING
DID YOU--?
VACUNA'S HERE.
ANOTHER ONE OF THE HELLFIRE CLUB'S LITTLE TRICKS?
NO MATTER. BEHOLD, THE FULL FORCE OF--

VRRRSSSSHHHHH
--THE DARK PHOENIX!
SPAKOOM
SPLORCH SPLORCH
BRAKKA BRAKKA
MEIN GOTT!
KABOOM KABOOM KABOOM
FLANK LEFT. I'LL--
SCREW THE MANEUVERS. JUST PULL THE DAMN TRIGGER UNTIL THE PIECE OF CRAP STOPS MOVING!
FPEW
FPEW
FPEW
JEAN... NO...

#$%&. COVER ME WHILE I RELOAD.
LIKE HELL! COVER ME.
THAT WAS SOME OF THE HEAVIEST FIREPOWER WE BROUGHT, NATE--WE NEED TO FALL BACK.
VRRR
TIMESLIDE BY TWO.
DON'T YOU--
VRRRSSSSSHHHHH

WASHINGTON, DC.
THE NEAR FUTURE.
DAMN IT, BISHOP--WE CEDED GROUND WE SHOULD HAVE HELD.
A TACTICAL RETREAT ISN'T COWARDICE. STICKING AROUND TO LOSE IN THE FIRST ROUND? THAT'S #$%& IDIOTIC.
LEARN THAT IN A MANUAL? MAYBE THEY SHOULD HAVE KEPT YOU ON DESK DUTY.
WHERE'D YOU DROP US, ANYWAY? ERA DOESN'T FEEL FAMILIAR.
LEAPED INTO THE FUTURE SO WE COULD REGROUP. BEYOND WHEN TEMPUS PICKED ME UP, SOMEWHERE AROUND--
INTRUDERS/THREATS? ARE YOU CONFUSED ABOUT YOUR CHRONAL POSITIONING?
SELF WOULD BE HAPPY TO INFORM YOU BEFORE SELF ARRESTS/TERMINATES YOU.

KRAAAK
DON'T WORRY-- I GOT YOU!
NOW COME ON. WAR-LOCK DRONES USUALLY TRAVEL IN PACKS.
I'LL CALL IN ONE OF OUR TELEPORTERS.
HOLD UP. WHAT THE HELL'S HAPPENING HERE?
REVELATION.
KITTY TOLD US ALL ABOUT HOW YOU GUYS USED TO FIGHT APOCALYPSE OVER AND OVER AGAIN. WELL, HIS HEIR?
YEAH, HE FINISHED THE JOB.
SORRY, SORRY, I'M GETTING AHEAD OF MYSELF. I RECOGNIZED THE TWO OF YOU RIGHT AWAY, BUT YOU PROBS GOT NO CLUE WHO I AM.
NAME'S TRISTA MARSHALL. BRONZE. AND I'M ONE OF THE FEW X-MEN LEFT. JITTER SENT ME HERE WHEN WE PICKED UP THE TIME DISRUPTION.

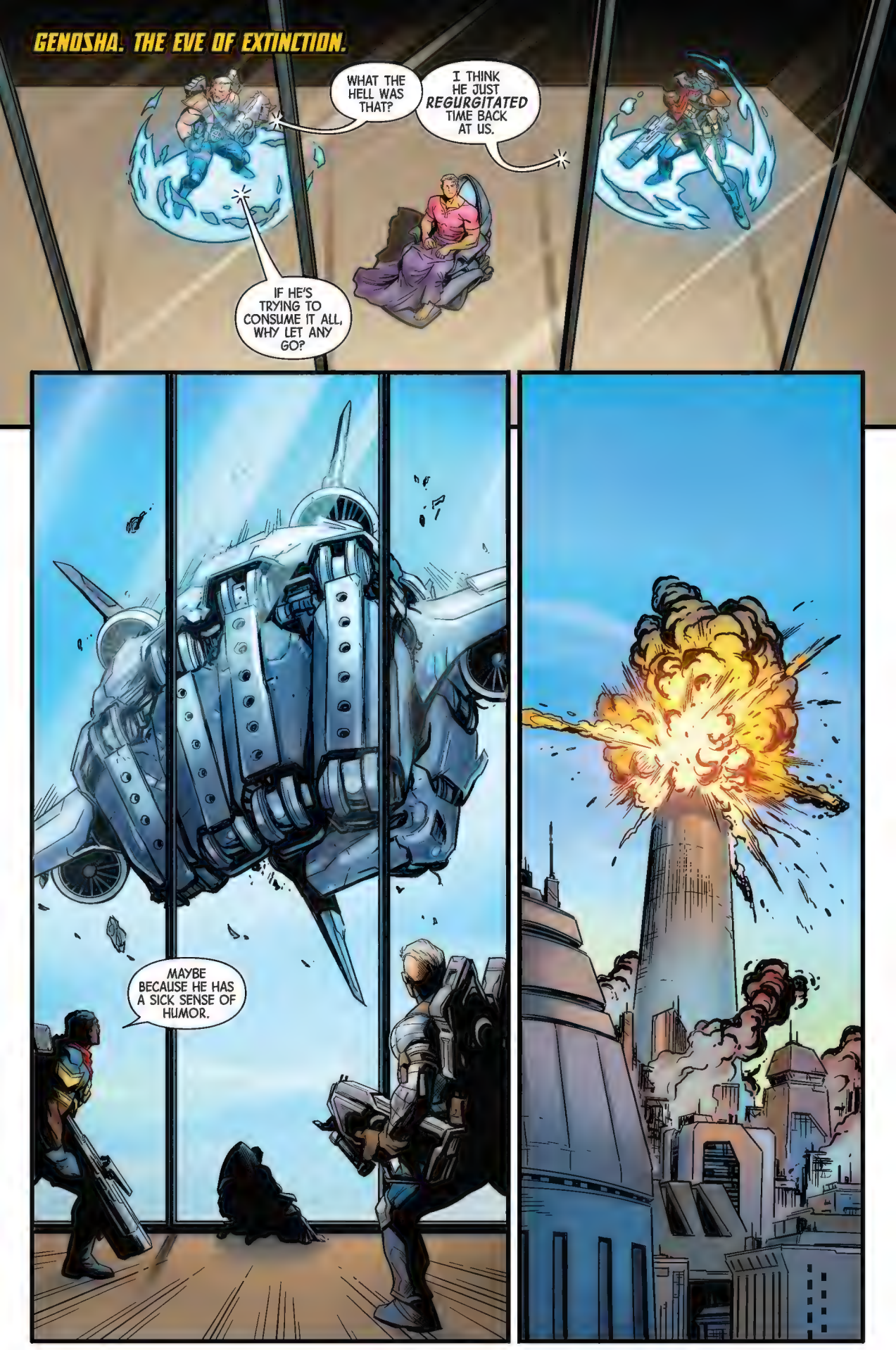

• THE EIGHT DEATHS
• ONE WORLD UNDER DOOM
• RISE OF THE NEW CHAMPIONS
• THE ETERNAL STORM
• THE FALSE METAL
• WHO WAITS WITHIN THE LAST EGG?
• STRANGE OF ASGARD
• GALACTIC LEADERS ASSASSINATED
• THE TIME OF STRIFE
• DORMAMMU INVASION OF EARTH
• MS. MARVEL - SECOND GENESIS
• ULTIMATE INCURSION
• WHO IS THE MAN WITH THE HAMMER?
• THE GHOST FIST I
• WHERE IS SPIDER-
• WHAT BECAME OF EM
• THE WILL OF DOOM
• UTGARD RISES
• AGE OF REVELATION
• BEWARE THE SPIDER-
• WHO WOULD TRADE AWA
IMMORTALITY?
• XVX
• 3K GENE BOMB
HERE--I TRIED TO GO BACK AND UNTANGLE EVERYTHING THAT LED TO THIS MESS. REVELATION'S HORSEMEN ROUNDED UP ALL OUR TIME-TRAVELERS, BUT I FIGURED IF ANY OTHERS EVER MADE IT THROUGH...
...MAYBE ONE OF YOU COULD HELP GO BACK AND FIX THINGS.

SO... CAN YOU HELP?
BRONZE, LISTEN, WE--
NO. AND EVERY SECOND WE SPEND HERE IS PUTTING ALL OF MUTANTKIND AT GREATER RISK.
THAT'S IT? YOU'RE NOT EVEN GOING TO TRY TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT--
WHAT KIND OF X-MEN ARE YOU?
VACUNA'S HERE? THIS IS A PIVOTAL MOMENT?
PING
PING
OR HE'S HUNTING US NOW.
TIMESLIDE BY TWO!

EGYPT.
CENTURIES AGO.
DAMN IT, NATE. WE LEFT THAT GIRL HIGH AND DRY.
HEY, YOU SAID IT YOURSELF-- "TACTICAL RETREAT," RIGHT?
WE GOT AMBUSHED. BUT IF HE'S FOLLOWING US, WE CAUGHT HIS EYE. HE'S DISTRACTED. THREATENED.
THE CHILDREN AREN'T STUPID. VACUNA WILL KNOW IF WE'RE LEADING HIM ON A WILD-GOOSE CHASE TO MEANINGLESS MOMENTS.
OH, I CHOSE AN IMPORTANT TIME IN MUTANT HISTORY.
ONE WHERE I DON'T MIND SEEING SOMEONE GET GOT.
MORE TRAVELERS FROM BEYOND TIME DARE TO CHALLENGE EN SABAH NUR?
YOU WILL MEET YOUR DEMISE LIKE ALL THE REST!

KAPOWWWM
NATE!
APOCALYPSE?
YOU DON'T THINK THE TIMELINE IS SCREWED ENOUGH ALREADY?
HE'LL GET BETTER.
PING
PING
THAT DIDN'T TAKE LONG.

SKABOOM
SHHKPAWMM
LET HIM HAVE IT!
HRKGRK
THAT IS MESSED UP.
AND I DON'T WANT TO STICK AROUND TO SEE WHAT'S COMING OUT.
HSSSSSRRRWWW
TIMESLIDE BY--


GENOSHA. THE EVE OF EXTINCTION.
WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?
I THINK HE JUST *REGURGITATED* TIME BACK AT US.
IF HE'S TRYING TO CONSUME IT ALL, WHY LET ANY GO?
MAYBE BECAUSE HE HAS A SICK SENSE OF HUMOR.

DETROIT. DECADES FROM NOW.
CRASH
DAMN!
BARELY TIMESLID OUT IN TIME. AND THIS AIN'T WHERE I AIMED.
#$%&--OUR SIGNALS MUST HAVE GOTTEN SCRAMBLED IN THE EXPLOSION.
BISHOP WENT WHERE I PROGRAMMED, AND I LANDED IN THIS HELLHOLE.
UNLESS HE'S SMEARED ACROSS GENOSHA AS ONE HELL OF A BAD TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE.
COULD BE I'M FINISHING THIS MISSION SOLO.
NOW WHERE DID HE SEND ME--?
WATCH OUT!

AH. OF COURSE. JACKBOOT CENTRAL. HIS OLD STOMPING GROUNDS.
GET BACK HERE, RADICALS! YOU'RE UNDER ARREST BY ORDER OF THE XSE!
CROOKED AS @#$%. NO SURPRISE.
SO HOW'D YOU END UP WITH A STICK UP YOUR--?
HUH?
C'MON, SIS--LET'S GET HOME BEFORE THIS BECOMES A FULL-ON RIOT.
BUT THEY'RE BEATING THAT BOY--
THIS AIN'T OUR WAR, SHARD. MY ONLY JOB IS KEEPING YOU SAFE.
HRRM.
TIMESLIDE BY ONE.

THE RUINS OF NEW CANAAN. SOMETIME IN THE 3800s.
VIP
VIP
VIP
PHOOM
PHOOM
PHOOM
SLAM
DAMN--THIS DON'T LOOK LIKE DETROIT TO ME. TIME REALLY IS FALLING--
AH--GUESS THE MOMENT WE SAW THAT GIANT SENTINEL HAND COMING AT US, WE BOTH THOUGHT OF HOME SWEET HOME.
WHICH FOR CABLE IS A DAMN WAR ZONE.
BRAKABOOM
NO WONDER HE'S AS SCREWED UP AS HE IS.
IT'S TOO LATE, DAYSPRING.
PLEASE, FOR YOUR OWN SAKE, GO NO FURTHER.
BUT JEN--AND TYLER--!
IT IS TOO LATE, OLD FRIEND.

LOSS AFTER LOSS, WAR AFTER WAR.
THAT WINNING PERSONALITY OF YOURS IS JUST YOUR WAY OF MAKING IT THROUGH THE DAY, HUH, NATE?
IF WE DON'T RENDEZVOUS AND TAKE DOWN VACUNA, WON'T BE ANY DAYS LEFT.
BUT WHERE WOULD CABLE GO THAT'S RELEVANT TO BOTH OF US?
IF HE WAS A REAL TOOL, HE'D CHOOSE ONE OF THE PLACES WE FOUGHT OVER HOPE, HIS DAUGHTER, BUT I'M NOT SURE--
CABLE! ONE OF STRYFE'S SOLDIERS IS STILL ALIVE OVER HERE!
CRAP, NOW OR NEVER.
TIMESLIDE BY ONE!
VIP
VIP
VIP
VIP

CHILE. DURING THE FALL OF X.
DAMN, I WAS WRONG. TIMESLIDE BY--
FINALLY SHOWED UP?
I ALMOST WENT TO ONE OF THE SPOTS WHERE HOPE AND I KICKED YOUR ASS, BUT THERE WERE TOO MANY TO COUNT. GOOD TIMES.
GIVE IT A REST, OLD MAN.
THIS IS THE DAY WE PUT THE CHILDREN OF THE VAULT DOWN THE FIRST TIME.
GOOD A PLACE AS ANY TO MAKE OUR LAST STAND, RIGHT?
WE'VE THROWN EVERYTHING AT HIM AND HE HASN'T FLINCHED.
I AIN'T LETTING TEMPUS TOSS HER LIFE AWAY, BISHOP.
DAMN, NATE-- NEITHER AM I. BUT WE'RE RUNNING OUT OF OPTIONS.

SO WE ADAPT. I JUST SAW THE HELL YOU SURVIVED, AND I'M GUESSING YOU SAW MINE.
THAT'S ALL MUTANTS DO. ADAPT OR DIE. AND NONE OF US ARE DYING TODAY.
YOU'RE RIGHT-- MUTANTS ADAPT. THE HARD WAY. WE'VE BOTH LIVED THAT.
BUT THE CHILDREN CONTROL THEIR CONDITIONS, RIGHT? IT'S JUST ONE STRAIGHT LINE.
AND YOU CAN INTERRUPT A STRAIGHT LINE.
HEH.
YOU KNOW, SOMETIMES I THINK WE COULD BE FRIENDS, AFTER ALL.
DON'T KID YOURSELF, RENEGADE.
PING
PING

BRAKABOOM
SHAKOOM
SHAKOOM
KAZZZZAP
KAZZZAP
HRRGGK--
UH-UH. FOOL ME ONCE...
FWUMPP
SMART. THAT'LL BUY A SECOND...

...AND TEMPUS CAN BUY US MORE.
ALL RIGHT-- I'M READY.
STAND BACK.
HEY--THOUGHT I TOLD YOU ALREADY. CUT THE SACRIFICE CRAP.
DON'T TRY TO STOP HIM, EVA. JUST SLOW HIM DOWN.
WE'LL DO THE REST.

SHR
VRK
VRRR--
HNHH-- WHATEVER YOU'RE GOING TO DO, DO IT FAST!
STILL REMEMBER THE EXACT POSITION?
LIKE IT WAS THIS MORNING.
BODYSLIDE BY FOUR.

THE CRÈCHE. BIRTHPLACE OF NEW CHILDREN OF THE VAULT.
YOU AGAIN--
LET VACUNA GO, TEMPUS!
VACUNA
VRRRSSSSSSSHHHHHH
FOOM

GHHHZZZZMMMPPPH

WHAT DID YOU DO?!
YOU TRIED TO WIPE US OUT.
WE ADAPTED.
AND WE ALWAYS WILL.
THIS TIME? WE WENT EASY ON YOU, CARETAKER.
YOU WON'T GET THAT LUCKY AGAIN.

NYC. PRESENT DAY.
THE CHILDREN EVOLVE UNDER LINEAR, CONTROLLED CONDITIONS.
BY FORCING VACUNA TO CONSUME THE MOMENT OF HIS OWN CREATION, HE CEASED TO EXIST--AND ANYTHING HE CONSUMED WAS RELEASED BACK INTO THE TIMESTREAM.
SO, THAT'S IT--WE DID IT?
IT'LL TAKE A WHILE FOR THE FABRIC OF TIME TO REKNIT ITSELF--AND THERE MIGHT BE SOME RIPS AND TEARS AT THE EDGES--BUT, YEAH, YOU DID IT.
AND I APPRECIATE YOU FINDING A SOLUTION THAT DIDN'T LEAVE ME AND BIG MOUTH LOCKED IN AN ETERNAL EMBRACE.
DON'T MENTION IT, KID.
THINK THE CHILDREN GOT THE LESSON THIS TIME?
NOT A CHANCE IN HELL.
BUT WE'LL KEEP TEACHING THEM UNTIL THEY DO.

MUTANTKIND WILL NEVER KNOW HOW CLOSE IT CAME TO *THE END.*
JUST REMEMBER-- YOU TWO CAUGHT GLIMPSES OF *A LOT* OF THINGS YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE SEEN.
FOR YOUR SAKES...TRY TO FORGET THEM.
IT CAN BE A REAL MIND-#$%& WHEN THE *FUTURE* FEELS LIKE YOUR PAST.
HEH. DON'T WE KNOW IT.
SO, WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH UGLY OVER THERE?
I GOTTA TAKE HIM IN. BUT AFTER THAT, I WAS THINKING...*TARGET PRACTICE.*
INTERESTED?
HELL. WHY NOT?
THE END... AND THE BEGINNING!

#1 Variant by **MARK BROOKS**

#1 Wraparound Hidden Gem Variant by **MIKE MIGNOLA** & **DAVE STEWART**

#1 Variant by **SALVADOR LARROCA** & **EDGAR DELGADO**

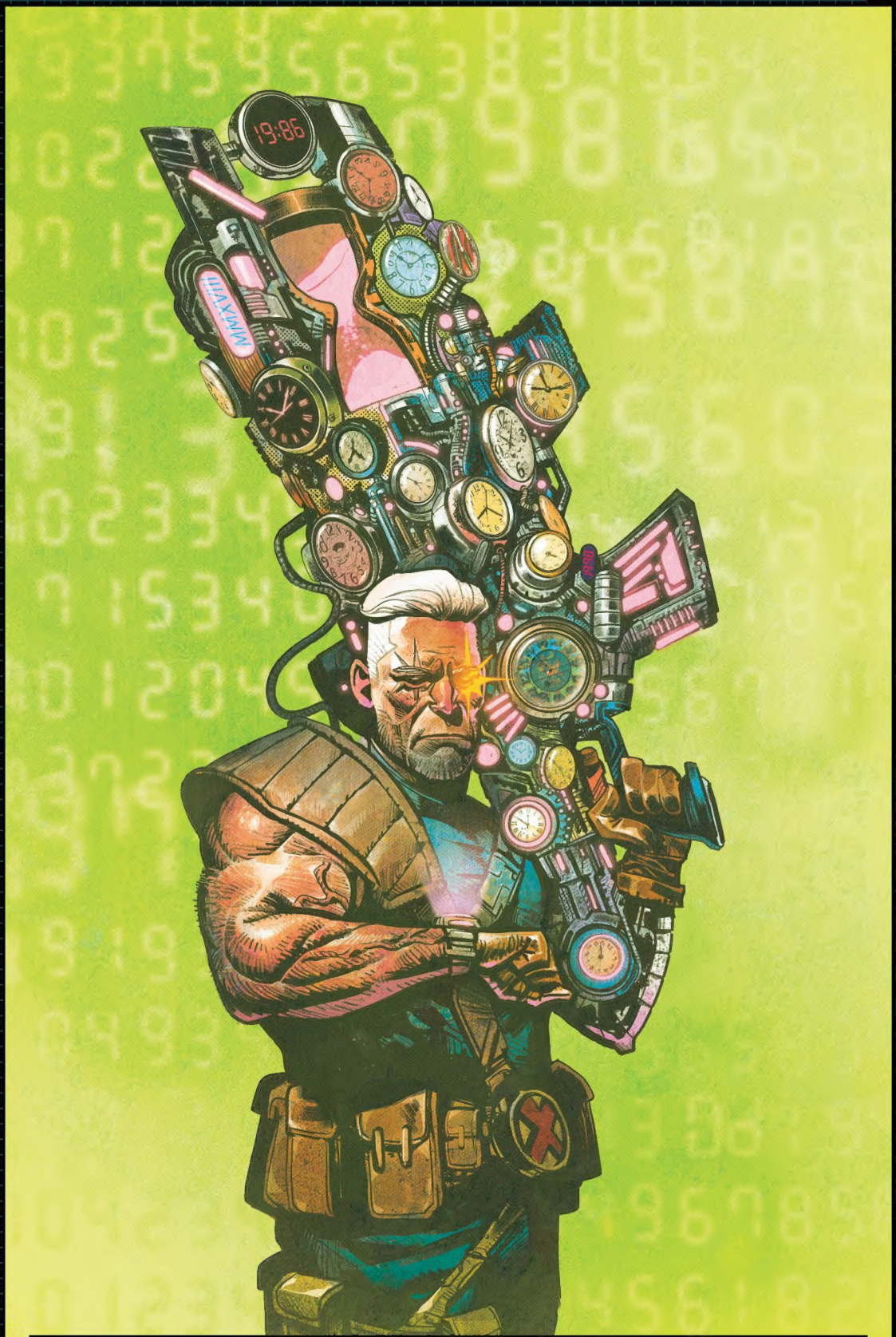
#2 Animated-Style Variant by **MARK BROOKS**

#2 Variant by **TONY DANIEL** & **FRANK D'ARMATA**

#3 Variant by **DOTUN AKANDE**

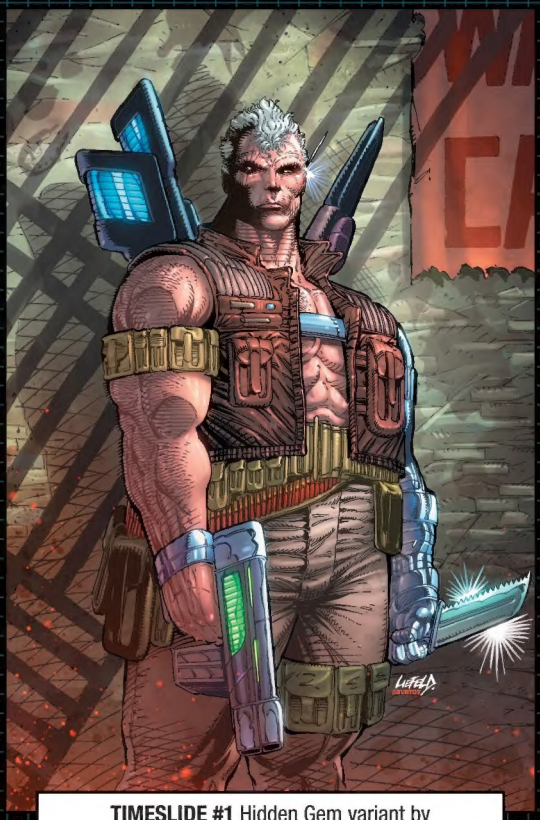
#4 Variant by **GERARDO SANDOVAL**

TIMESLIDE #1 Spoiler Variant by **DAVID NAKAYAMA**



TIMESLIDE #1 Variant by **MIKE DEL MUNDO**

TIMESLIDE #1 Winter Holiday Variant by
BETSY COLA



TIMESLIDE #1 Hidden Gem variant by
ROB LIEFELD & **JESUS ABURTOV**

TIMESLIDE #1 variant by
FRANCESCO MOBILI & **FRANK MARTIN**

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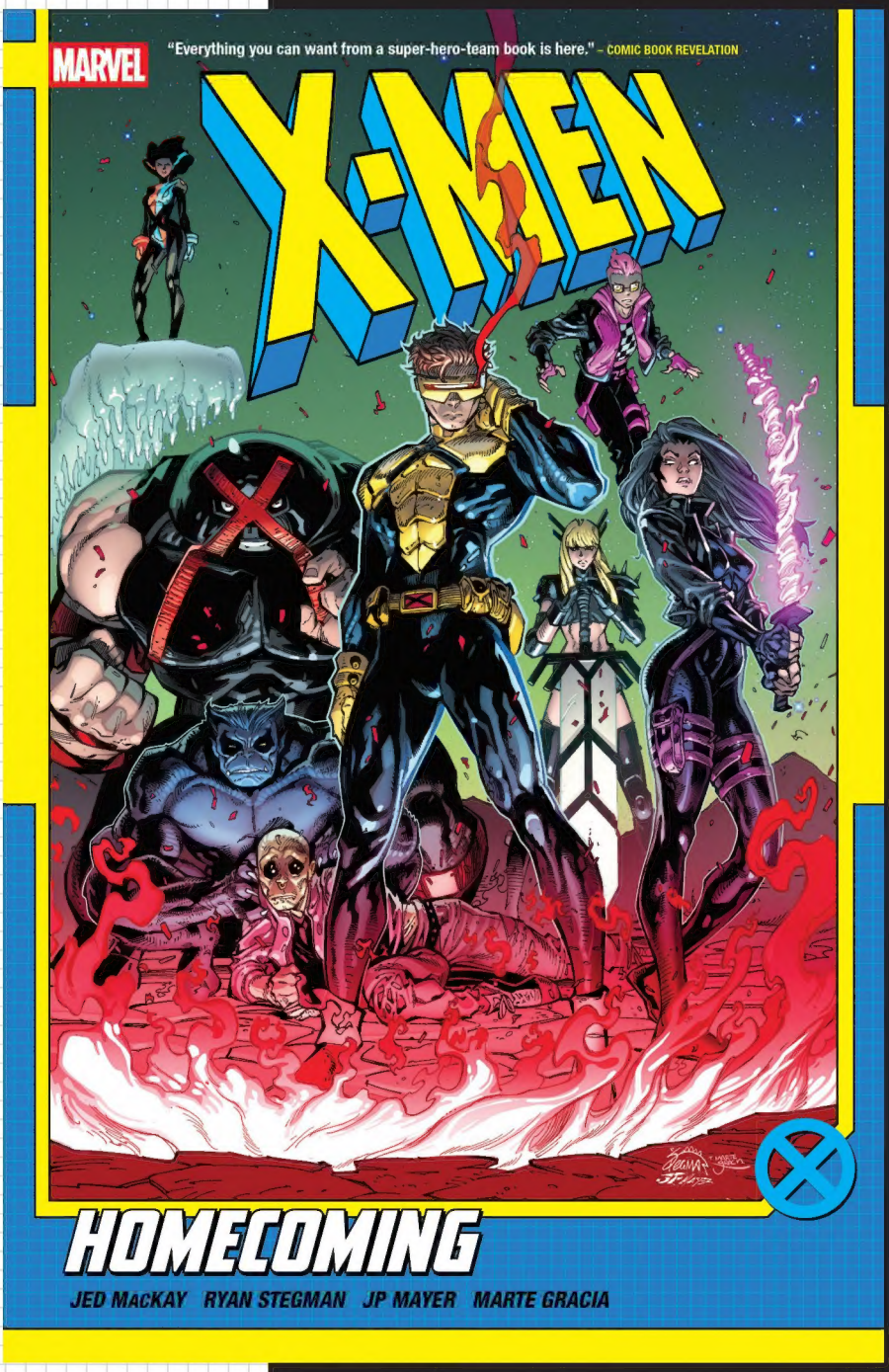
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